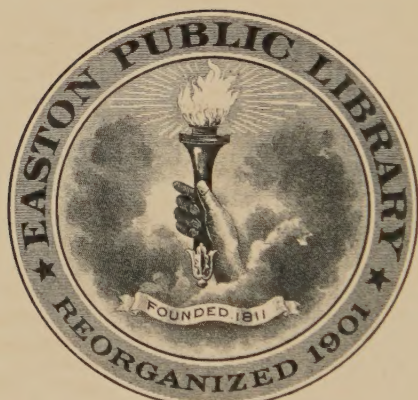


PROCESSIONAL!

John Howard Lawson



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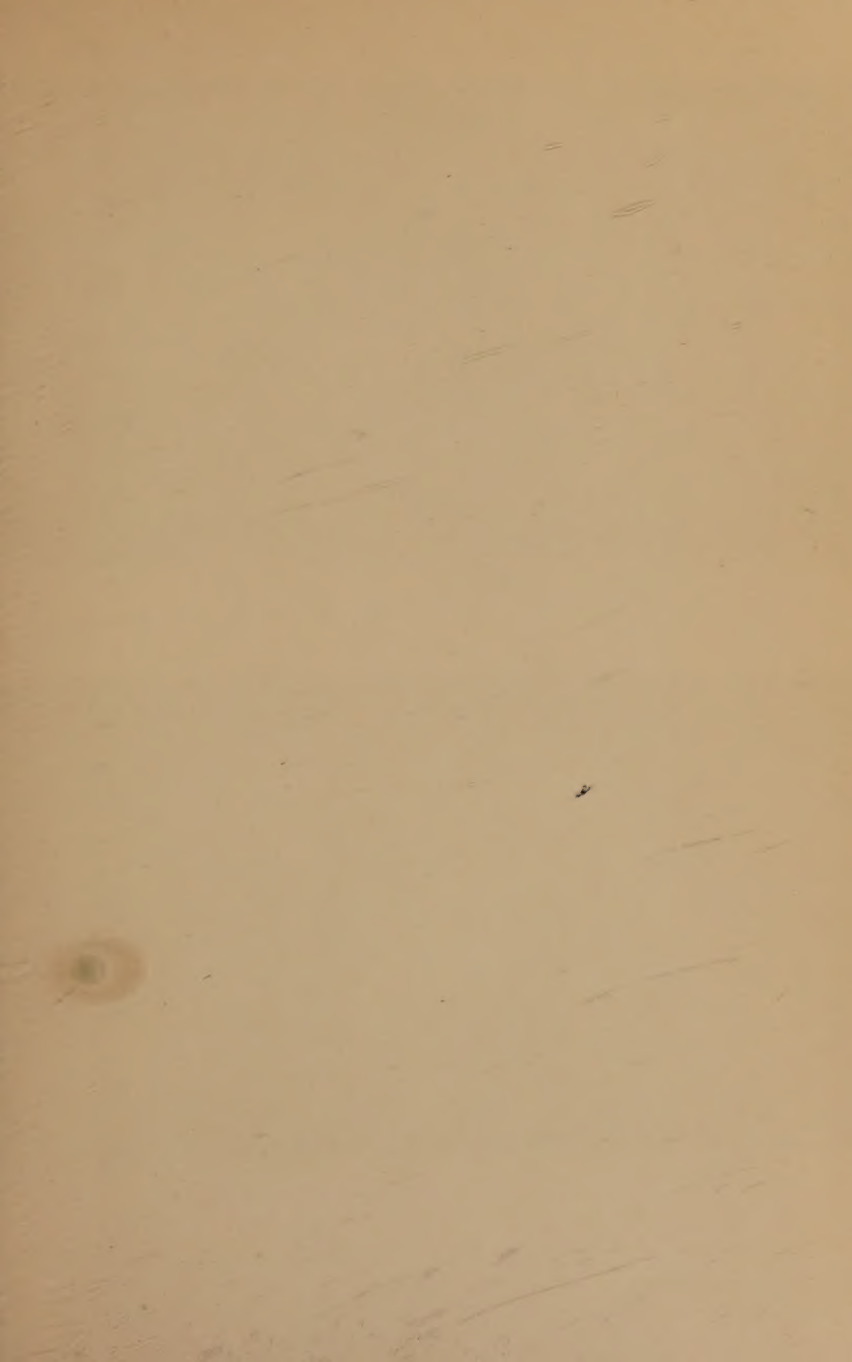
Mrs. George W. Sitgreaves

2





PROCESSIONAL





Setting by Mordecai Gorelik

Photograph by Francis Bruguiere

Act I of the Theatre Guild Production



Setting by Mordecai Gorelik

Photograph by Francis Bruguiere

Act III, Scene III, of the Theatre Guild Production

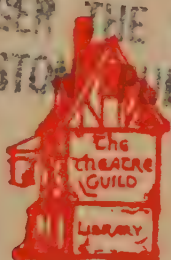
PROCESSIONAL

*A Jazz Symphony of American Life
in Four Acts*

BY

JOHN HOWARD LAWSON

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THE THEATRE GUILD VERSION,
WITH EIGHT ILLUSTRATIONS
FROM PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE
THEATRE GUILD PRODUCTION

NEW YORK
THOMAS SELTZER

1925

812
L425

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JOHN HOWARD LAWSON

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JAN 1958

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PREFACE

So much is being talked and written about the art of the theatre—on the one hand the babble of the æsthete, on the other the far more imaginative babble of the press agent—that it is no light task to contribute another few pages to this sum of books, lectures, conversations, articles, prefaces. Each of us has his own bright particular vision of a richer and fuller American dramatic art. And none of this is of any special importance as long as it remains in the realm of theory. In the theatre more than in any other field the experiment must be a living entity, move and quiver in the calcium glare, before even its experimental value can be determined. Explanations of plan or purpose are just so much hokus-pokus after the fact. The play must stand by itself if it is to stand at all.

I cannot however, resist indulging myself in the dangerous luxury of theoretical explanation:— I have endeavored to create a method which shall express the American scene in native idiom, a method as far removed from the older realism as from the facile mood of Expressionism. It is apparent that this new technique is essentially vaudevillesque in character—a development, a moulding to my own uses, of the rich vitality of the two-a-day and the musical extravaganza.

This is not an abstract theory. I have built upon this ground for the very practical reason that it seems to me to be the only ground on which to build. The legitimate theatre seems without warmth or richness of method. It is only in the fields of vaudeville and revue that a native craftsmanship exists. Here at least a shining if somewhat distorted mirror is held up to our American nature. Here the national consciousness finds at least a partial reflection of itself in the mammy melody, the song and dance act and the curtain of real pearls. Here the concern is with a direct contact, an immediate emotional response across the footlights.

There are many to whom such a method seems too highly-colored slapstick and vulgar to suit the needs of the sophisticated mind. It has become the fashion to forget that the history of theatrical entertainment is a tradition of crowded movement, violent physical vitality. Aristophanes, Shakespeare, Moliere, interpreted a lively world in an almost indecently lively manner. If this outer movement ceases to exist a play might just as well be phrased in terms of a sonnet sequence or a grammar of Esperanto. And indeed the average drawing-room play has about reached this point of absolute nullity—three walls with footlights on the fourth side, lifeless dialogue and improbable enunciation—these have become a fixed standard. Color and movement are weeded out in the interests of a realism which has nothing remotely to do with reality.

There has recently been a great flood of drably

humorous plays about Main streeters and commuters. Many of these have considerable interest and value, but I am at a loss to know why they should be labelled realistic. I can find a vaudeville Jew or Irishman on any street corner. But the 1924 version of the average commuter (he has taken his pathetic course through two dozen plays in the past six months) seems to my way of thinking stereotyped out of all semblance of reality. All around me I see the grotesque of the American environment, the colorful exaggeration of the American language—these are Rabelaisian in their intensity.

If you sit beside the commuter on his evening train, the odds are at least even that he will tell you things that beggar description long before you reach Rosedale or Connipion Center. There are a thousand facets of American middle-class life. In most respects small-minded and disreputable, but not always drab, often chaotically immoral, often grotesquely agitated. The feeling and stir of it has as yet barely been suspicioned in our literature. A nation of Puritans: that fact has been sufficiently over-emphasized. But even the veriest dead rot of Puritanism which has spread from New England to poison the Middle West, is violent, perverse, and dramatic in its workings.

I do not wish to suggest that one should take the newspapers too seriously. Nor that the murders and scandals which leap from the pages of yellow journalism are the whole story of average daily existence in the United States. But these newspapers are very

close to the hearts and viewpoints of the millions who read them in subways and street-cars. Their psychological importance is tremendous.

The reality of America spiritually and materially, is a movement, a rhythm of which the inner meaning has not been found. Buried under the hokum of advertisements, headlines, radio speeches, there is a genuine inner necessity, a sense of direction. What is this key and meaning? What does the future hold beside the indefinite prolongation of human life by glandular treatment and the total annihilation of it in the eagerly expected Next-World-War?

I am not offering solutions. I am not even stating a concise question. My concern is with the theatre. But the blood and bones of a living stage must be the blood and bones of the actuality stirring around us. As yet not a whisper of this actuality has been heard across the footlights. While the Twentieth Century is exciting to the point of chaos, no deeper emotions stir the drama than those based on superficial risibilities, or the tear that comes at the sound of an old song. One can imagine a violence of meaning and feeling breaking upon a Broadway playhouse, something like hysteria spreading from row to row, melting the fixed pleasantness of the faces, a contagion of excitement.

We are a long way from the realization of such a dream. One has heard much talk of dramatic progress in the past five years. But a good deal of this progress has been backwards or sideways. On the one hand, we

have what is somewhat ironically termed the commercial theatre, given over to the unbelievable repetition of the same plot, the same joke, the same characters, dished up each year with pitiful lack of showmanship. The floundering method of production makes the producer a lucky man if one out of five productions brings a reasonable profit. This gigantic game of chance can hardly be called a legitimate business. On the other hand we have the art theatre existing in a feeble trance totally removed from the rush and roar of things as they are, a sanctuary with doors barred against the world. This idea of pure beauty as something quite removed from the brutal forms of reality is of course completely uncreative in its results. Art as an escape from life is no better than morphine, rotary clubs, murder, speech-making, or any of the other methods used by hundred-per-cent Americans to escape from actuality.

* * *

I have endeavored in the present play, to lay the foundations of some sort of native technique, to reflect to some extent the color and movement of the American processional as it streams about us. The rhythm is staccato, burlesque, carried out by a formalized arrangement of jazz music. A point of attack so far removed from the usual theatre method naturally requires a new vision in directing, acting and scenic design. I cannot sufficiently express my gratitude to

the Theatre Guild, and especially to Mr. Philip Moeller, for the fine energy and intelligence with which the production has been realized.

J. H. L.

January, 1925.

The cast of the THEATRE GUILD PRODUCTION as
originally presented at the GARRICK THEATRE,
January 12, 1925

PROCESSIONAL

A Jazz Symphony of American life

by JOHN HOWARD LAWSON

The production directed by Philip Moeller
Settings and Costumes by Mordecai Gorelik
CHARACTERS (In order of appearance)

<i>Boob Elkins, a newsboy</i>	Ben Grauer
<i>Isaac Cohen, who keeps the General Store</i>	Philip Loeb
<i>Sadie Cohen, his daughter</i>	June Walker
<i>Jake Psinski</i>	Charles Halton
<i>Pop Pratt, a Civil-War Veteran</i>	William T. Hays
<i>MacCarthy</i>	{ Carl Eckstrom
<i>Bill</i>	
<i>Phillpots, a newspaper man</i>	Donald Macdonald
<i>The Sheriff</i>	Redfield Clarke
<i>A Man in a Silk Hat</i>	William F. Canfield
<i>Old Maggie</i>	Patricia Barclay
<i>Mrs. Euphemia Stewart Flimmins</i>	Blanche Friderici
<i>Dynamite Jim</i>	George Abbott
<i>Rastus</i>	Samuel L. Manning
<i>Slop</i>	Robert Collyer
<i>Smith</i>	Stanley Lindahl
<i>1st Soldier</i>	Lee Strasberg
<i>2nd Soldier</i>	Stanley Lindahl
<i>3rd Soldier</i>	Roy Requa
<i>4th Soldier</i>	Samuel Chinitz
<i>Soldiers and Miners</i>	Alvah Bessie, Arthur Sircom, Ernest Thompson, Harvey Tiers, Sanford Meisner

Jazz Band Jacob Lampe, Sydney Raymond,
Harry Furman, Ray Evans, Albert Koski

*Scene: Outskirts of a large town in the West Virginia
coal fields during a strike.*

Act I: On the Fourth of July.

Act II: The same evening.

Scene I: Dynamite Jim. Scene II: The house on the hill.

Act III: The next day.

Scene I: Mother and son.

Scene II: What happened to Sadie.

Scene III: The man hunt.

Act IV: Five months later. The Jazz Wedding.

Stage Manager: Horace M. Gardner

Assistant Stage Manager: Stanley Lindahl

Technical Director: Carolyn Hancock

The THEATRE GUILD, Inc.

Board of Managers

Theresa Helburn	Philip Moeller	Maurice Wertheim
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Subscription Secretary

Addie Williams

Stage Managers

Philip Loeb and Robert Lucius Cook

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PROCESSIONAL
ACT I

CAST OF CHARACTERS

Boob Elkins
Isaac Cohen
Sadie Cohen
Jake Psinski
Pop Pratt
MacCarthy } Soldiers
Bill }
Phillpots
The Sheriff
A Man in a Silk Hat
Old Maggie
Mrs. Euphemia Stewart Flimmins
Dynamite Jim
Rastus
Slop
Smith
1st Soldier
2nd Soldier
3rd Soldier
4th Soldier

Place: Outskirts of a large town in the West Virginia coal fields during a strike.

Time: The present.

PROCESSIONAL

ACT I

ON THE FOURTH OF JULY

A drop curtain like those used in the older vaudeville theatres, represents a town street painted with brick buildings, signs of CENTRAL HOTEL, PALACE MOVIE, QUICK LUNCH, etc. In center of curtain is the door of Cohen's General Store, with show window painted on curtain and this sign: ISAAC COHEN THE CUT-RATE STORE, GREEN-GROCER, ANTISEPTIC BARBER, KOSHER DELICATESSEN, MINING TOOLS. Above the door a small practicable window in the curtain. The tone is that of the usual vaudeville drop, except that it is more startlingly crude, vigorous in color contrast, blaringly American.

A broad uniform row of steps leads up to the stage. Stage and auditorium brilliantly lighted.

[Down the aisle of theatre comes a newsboy selling papers, shouting as he comes. BOOB ELKINS is a thin pimply lad of sixteen, with bright eyes and a hoarse voice.]

PROCESSIONAL

BOOB

Extry! Extry! Trouble in West Virginia! Charleston paper! Jazzin' up the big strike!

[By this time he is on the stage, still shouting]

Extry! Extry!

[COHEN sticks his head out from square window in curtain. A middle-aged merchant with a lisp that makes his caressing voice a little ridiculous. A kindly man puzzled and worried by the violent labor dispute going on around him. The vaudeville type of Yiddish figure. He has just gotten out of bed, his sleepy head surmounted by an absurd nightcap.]

COHEN

Say just lay one on the doorstep will you? Here's a nickel.

[He throws the coin. BOOB catches it adroitly. BOOB throws newspaper on doorstep. The head above disappears.]

BOOB

[shouting]

Extry! Soldiers an' miners clash! Threats thrill throngs!

[He exits left.]

[Enter right SADIE COHEN, a sallow-faced girl of seventeen, all dressed up in white with short skirts and frills calculated to fill out her childish figure. Her hair in two neat pigtails. Sometimes she

sticks her finger in her mouth. She often stands on one leg and giggles]

SADIE

[As she runs in breathless with news]

Popper . . . Popper. . . .

[She stands on one leg for a minute waiting, then louder]

Hey . . . Popper!

[COHEN sticks his head out of square window again with nightcap as before]

COHEN

Well who's dead now?

SADIE

Nobuddy yet but they're gonna kill lots a' people, oo . . . lots a' people.

COHEN

Come indoors then you li'l devil you, before you get shot. Can't I get no sleep on a holiday?

SADIE

They got a lot a' soldiers an' they got martial law.

COHEN

Never heard of him.

SADIE

[more and more breathless]

The Governor a' West Virginia has made a big paper sayin' it's martial law an' everybuddy can be kilt.

. . . an' the soldiers has taken the mines an' the strikers has got music an' they're marchin' an' they're marchin'. . .

COHEN

Is that a fact? There it is for the Fourth a' July . . .
Coal dust an' blood . . . oi there's no money in it!
I'll be right down, come indoors Sadie.

[He disappears from window.]

[The JAZZ MINERS come through the audience playing the jazz march which forms a background throughout the play, "Yankee Doodle Blues." The band is a group of nine men in tattered blue overalls, playing on an incongruous assortment of instruments ranging from Jew's harps to bassoons. These do not keep time or tune very well but the effect is lively. The men are rugged types, hardened mine workers of the mountain region.]
THE JAZZ BAND: (1) The leader SLOP, is thin, with a long glum face, playing on an old-fashioned flute. (2) JAKE PSINSKI, a Pole, with fiery wild eyes and a starved face, blows a long trumpet. (3) RASTUS JOLLY is a Negro, his torn overalls hung up by a string over his muscular back. He plays a banjo and sings most of the time for good measure. (4) a big SOILED MAN with a beard which looks as if chickens might roost in it manipulates the slide trombone. (5) He is followed by a little middle-aged anemic man who makes a ghostly effort to manage a badly dented French

horn. *The feeble player of this feeble instrument is known as FELIX.* (6) ALEXANDER GORE, a man of the hayseed type, straw-colored hair and beard, red face, red bandanna handkerchief tied around his scrawny neck, blows on the big bassoon. (7) DAGO JOE, a sleek greasy Italian, has an accordion. (8) WAYNE WHIFFLEHAGEN, a man with a curious face, plays a harmonica. His face looks twisted as if seen in a distorted mirror. (9) SMITH, young and serious, brings up the rear with the big drum banging methodically. This group makes its noisy eruption into the theatre, marches around stage and lines up still playing. SLOP, the glum man with the flute, stands a step below leading them waving his arms. SADIE stands on one leg at edge of stage.*]

SLOP

[pointing flute at PSINSKI shouts angrily]

Hey . . . you!

[The band stops in a straggling manner. SLOP approaches PSINSKI angrily]

You with the face, what you trying to hog it all for?

PSINSKI

[Taking SLOP by the arm]

My friend we make the jazz today for the glory of the working class.

*Note: The arrangement of instruments used by the JAZZ BAND can be modified according to the necessities of production.

SMITH

[*bored*]

Speech . . . speech . . .

PSINSKI

Each man make the big noise what he can.

[*PSINSKI is evidently a man of education, slight foreign accent*]

DAGO JOE

[*pleased*]

Sure maka da beeg noise.

SLOP

Aw say it with flowers—I'm a musician, that's what I am, I can sing too, that's my nature. This bunch a' tin-horn mechanics is rotten!

[*He sits down on top step wearily. SADIE walks in front of the JAZZ BAND, looking curiously at instruments, finger in mouth*]

GORE

[*poking SMITH*]

Who's the skirt?

SMITH

Store-keeper's daughter.

WAYNE

She's a li'l lady, y' know what I mean.

SMITH

A clean square li'l girl.

[Seeing that there is a halt, RASTUS has seated himself on steps at extreme left, lazily twanging banjo]

SLOP

I wish Jim Flimmins was here, he's the guy got music inside him comes out natural like the foam off beer.

SMITH

Well Jim's in jail where we'll all be before long.

RASTUS

No Sir!

PSINSKI

We do not go to jail, we got rights, we are class-conscious workmen——

GOBE

[scratchng himself uncomfortably]

I ain't conscious a' nuthin' except an itch an' a thirst.

SLOP

Now if Jim was here he'd blow a horn like it would make the cows shimmy.

SADIE

[who has been listening to the conversation, eager and scared]

I can shimmy!

RASTUS

Wanna join the coal town jazz, kid? Wanna step
along in the big peerade with us guys?

SADIE

I'd be scared.

GORE

[*offering SADIE his bassoon*]
Wanna play, kid?

SADIE

[*looks down it*]
What's in it?

GORE

Noise.

[*SADIE turns to SOILED MAN with the trombone who is
pulling it in and out sadly*]

SADIE

I like this one 'cause it slides so funny.

WAYNE

Aw give it to her.

[*SOILED MAN looks puzzled, wipes the mouthpiece
carefully and hands it to her*]

Gentlemen, lemme introduce Miss Sadie Cohen, about to
tickle the slide trombone.

[*SADIE tries to play, when COHEN reappears at window
in his undershirt*]

ACT ONE

11

COHEN

Sadie what's that in your hand?

SADIE

Look pop.

COHEN

Lay it down.

WAYNE

Just a slide trombone——

COHEN

Oi a lot a' musical rippers, they don't mean you no good with their slide trombones! Get in the house for once will you? I'm comin' down.

[He disappears from window]

SADIE

[giving back the trombone]

I don't do nuthin' I hadn't oughter, but popper's always got the blues, he's always scoldin'.

[Down aisle of theatre comes POP PRATT, hobbling on a stick, a typical civil war veteran wizened and unbelievably old in his tattered blue uniform. He has one wooden leg. He carries a faded American flag]

POP PRATT

[calling as he comes, in a plaintive cracked voice]

Hey boys wait for me, I wanna march along in this procession——

WAYNE

He can't march, he ain't a member a' the Union.

POP PRATT

What's that?

WAYNE

A back number.

SMITH

A hot sketch.

SLOP

You ain't in, that's all, you're out.

POP PRATT

Try the other ear I don't hear very good.

SLOP

You tell him.

[SADIE sits down at foot of steps center practically
in the audience looking up at group of men]

WAYNE

[to POP PRATT]

Where you goin' with a face like the newspapers was
writ on it?

SMITH

What's eatin' you, old man?

GORE

[pulling him the other way]

What for you wave the old flag?

[*RASTUS continues throughout to twang banjo in lazy accompaniment to scene, now and then breaking into song*]

RASTUS

[*sings*]

"He's got them Yankee Doodle Blues . . .
He's ninety an' he's spry,
With them never-say-die,
Them historic blues . . . Yankee Doodle Blues . . ."

POP PRATT

I'm acelebratin' the forty-four states.

SMITH

There's forty-eight states now.

POP PRATT

Eh?

SMITH

[*loudly pointing to flag*]

Them stars is states, stars in that flag.

POP PRATT

Oh . . .

[*scratching head*]

I quit countin' year Amanda died: Mandy died in '93
. . . now it don't seem like she could be dead, her with
her yaller curls.

WAYNE

I bet you seen lots of 'em die.

PROCESSIONAL

POP PRATT

[*not heeding him, pounds stick on ground and chuckles*]
That girl was a devil . . . yes Sir. Yaller-haired girls
die quicker, they uses their strength dancin'.

WAYNE

Ain't that the cat's knuckles? Ninety years a' drums
arattlin', he's seen wars an' deaths an' the makin' a'
states an' yet he won't die.

RASTUS

[*continues his accompaniment*]
"He's got them Yankee Doodle . . .
Yes Sir . . . Blues."

POP PRATT

They don't make girls the same no more, ain't got the
same shape now, I seen shapes change——

PSINSKI

[*pushing the others aside importantly*]
This is somethin' you ain't never seen, this is indus-
trial, savvy—there's men marchin' men in a sweat an'
their flag is the black smoke in the sky, 'cause they
dig coal from the ground——

[PRATT *has not heard a word*]

SLOP

Save your hot air, he ain't your kind.

SMITH

Listen then.

[*He cocks old man's hand over ear, then he beats a lively volley on the drum*]

POP PRATT

[*puts his hat on and salutes*]

I hear the drums arattlin' across Gettysburg.

WAYNE

Don't it beat Hell the way they walk aroun' rememberin'?

[*RASTUS sings low as PRATT continues*]

POP PRATT

[*looking very much alive*]

Yes, friends, in them days sinful pride leaped up an' we fought our brothers, American blood to water American earth. . . .

[*tapping wooden leg with stick*]

That's what my flesh done; fertilizer. My leg went to make the flowers grow on Gettysburg, we fought our brothers we did. . . .

PSINSKI

[*shouts at PRATT*]

All men are brothers!

POP PRATT

[*turning and wiggling his finger in his ear*]

Try the other ear.

[COHEN *dressed, has come out of store, carrying a large wooden board which he sets up beside door, on it written in big letters, HEADQUARTERS FOR GUNS—WHOLESALE PRICES. He pushes through the men to SADIE, who stands up*]

COHEN

Sadie . . . Sadie. . . Did I tell you to get in the house or are you deaf already is it?

SADIE

I wanna hear the music, Pop.

COHEN

Ain't you got a swell victrola? Didn't I tell you them fellers mean you no good?

[*turning to the JAZZ BAND*]

Get away from the front a' my store an' leave my daughter alone.

SMITH

We ain't said a word to her.

WAYNE

She's just been settin' there an' that's the truth.

COHEN

[*his arm affectionately around his daughter*]

A child raised for sassiety, understand . . . a flower, I am here to say it, a rosebud, a tulip, a forget-me-not, a regular Madonnis! . . . what else? A lady. . . . Have I spoken?

[JAZZ BAND *is impressed*. COHEN *looks them over*]
Oi, what a bunch this is.

PSINSKI

This is the Industrial Jazz chosen for their music talent, every mother's son.

POP PRATT

[*coming between them trying to hear*]
What's that?

COHEN

[*peering down the bassoon*]
Have you got a bomb in that thing?

PSINSKI

[*catching COHEN by arm and swinging him round*]
Bourgeois!

COHEN

You dirty foreigner.

SMITH

[*swinging COHEN round the other way*]
Who the Hell's a foreigner, what are you yourself?

COHEN

What's your name?

SMITH

Smith.

COHEN

Mine's Cohen, you an' me is Americans, shake.

[SMITH *turns away from him*, COHEN shakes his own
hand]

It's just the same by me—half 'a these birds can't even
talk in U. S. A.

DAGO JOE

Me savvy all linguagio, sail on da sea, walk on da land,
see all da place, me clever wop, speaka Sensen wid
Chinee girl, speaka Spearmint wid Eskimo girl, see all
da place!

SLOP

Line up boys, it's your turn to show 'em.

FELIX

Peerade——

WAYNE

March——

SMITH

Procession——

SLOP

An' for Christ's sake, sugar it!

COHEN

[*as JAZZ BAND forms in line*]

Play the music, make a little music, murder an' starve—
rights . . . rights . . . wave the flag an' play a little
jazz. . . .

[*Music starts with a bang and they march off right led by SLOP. Music continues in distance off stage. PRATT, COHEN and SADIE remain*]

POP PRATT

[*hand cocked over ear*]

Why don't them boys make a noise eh . . . music, eh?

COHEN

You got luck an' you don't know it. Come on Sadie.

[*He exits into shop. SADIE is at door of shop when BOOB returns still shouting*]

BOOB

Extry! Extry! Threats thrill throngs!

POP PRATT

Here y'are boy.

[*PRATT buys a paper. BOOB turns to SADIE*]

BOOB

Hello Sadie.

SADIE

Good mornin'.

BOOB

Give us a kiss will you.

SADIE

[*pointing to PRATT*]

Hush, the old man.

BOOB

When you gonna give me the other garter off your leg?

SADIE

I can't . . . I got nuthin' to keep my stockings up.

BOOB

I'll give you a new pair with diamond buckles.

SADIE

You're kiddin', you ain't got the money——

BOOB

I'd steal for you! Give us a kiss for the Fourth a' July.

SADIE

I don't want to.

BOOB

[produces a pile of firecrackers from pocket]

I'll give you a firecracker if you do.

SADIE

[hesitating, finger in mouth]

Well . . . no, I don't want to.

BOOB

I thought you was my girl.

SADIE

I ain't nobuddy's girl. I'm free, I'm a suffragette, I don't care!

[She goes into shop]

BOOB

Aw listen, Sadie.

[*He follows her into shop, but only for an instant, then he is projected out head first, falling on the ground. COHEN appears in door*]

COHEN

Out an' stay out, a boy that's no good, a thief, a loafer, I don't want to soil the hands on you again.

[*COHEN disappears. BOOB picks himself up, produces firecracker, lights it and throws it into shop. A small explosion is heard inside. COHEN's head appears at door*]

That's how boys learn to be gunmen an' murderers. You will end in a big jail.

[*He disappears again. PRATT limps forward*]

POP PRATT

What's amatter here?

BOOB

You're dead an' buried an' you don't know it.

[*He waves pack of firecrackers*]

POP PRATT

What you doin' with them things?

BOOB

[*hopping around*]

Celebratin' my country 'tis of thee . . . it makes people dance!

[*He lights the pack, throws it under PRATT and runs off shouting*]

Extry! Threats thrill throngs!

[*BOOB has gone. The firecrackers explode with bangs and puffs of smoke. The old man loses his balance, waves stick wildly and then goes flat on the ground. Enter on either side of stage simultaneously a soldier fully armed. The soldiers stand at either side, worried as if they were attacking an enemy trench. MACCARTHY, muscular and grizzled, hard-boiled, with dirty red hair, whispers loudly:*]

MACCARTHY

D'ye hear it Bill?

BILL

[*a young city boy, tough but easily frightened*]
I heard shootin'.

[*They approach PRATT on the ground*]

MACCARTHY

They've done for the old man.

POP PRATT

[*angrily*]

Help me up, bloomin' fools.

MACCARTHY

Where'd it get you?

POP PRATT

My ear——

[MACCARTHY and BILL look at each other]

Louder. .

MACCARTHY

[*shouts*]

What was it?

POP PRATT

Rheumatism.

MACCARTHY

He ain't hurt.

[*They help him up*]

BILL

Handle him careful, he's a veteran.

MACCARTHY

No he ain't, where's his American legion button?

BILL

Sh . . . the other war . . . the civil . . .

[COHEN comes out of shop with a bunch of American flags on a stand which he hangs by the door, on it a sign, "YOUR COUNTRY'S FLAG. SPECIAL SALE." He bustles forward]

COHEN

Good mornin' Gentlemen, nice mornin', can I sell you anything?

BILL

Say, you remind me of Second Avenue.

COHEN

A New York boy?

BILL

No, Jersey City.

COHEN

Keep your eye out Sammy, this is a tough place.

MACCARTHY

That's the bunk, tie it outside.

COHEN

They got what they call industrial warfare here——

MACCARTHY

[*slapping chest*]

We been in a real war: what about the Argonne?

COHEN

Well, what about it?

MACCARTHY

Ever hear of Chateau Thierry? There was blood in the woods that day, a stinkin' lot a' blood.

BILL

Shut your head, I cough up every time I think a' that.

MACCARTHY

Uncle Sam's gonna keep order here, any guy doubts it goes underground with lead in him, that's the law an' order program, savvy, 'cause the place is lousy with foreigners that don't understand American freedom——

[*Enter PSINSKI, a bullet wound in shoulder, shirt torn open shows a red scar*]

BILL

What's amatter with him?

PSINSKI

Some guy didn't like the music, just a flesh wound, it's nuthin'.

MACCARTHY

Hurry up Bill, we better go look.

[*turning to COHEN*]

Send the old man home, he'll get hurt. Come on Bill.

BILL

[*whining as they go*]

I don't half like it.

[*Exit MACCARTHY and BILL. Off stage the recurrent rhythm of marching feet and music*]

PSINSKI

[*center*]

Hear them feet ashufflin' . . . the feet go clippety-clop an' the music make a splash like dynamite!

COHEN

[to POP PRATT]

Better go home Pop, looks like trouble here.

POP PRATT

[*listening intently*]

What's that about beer?

COHEN

[*shouting angrily in PRATT's ear*]

Trouble, disorder, riots, fighting . . .

[*Enter PHILLPOTS, young, amiable, brisk, neat made-to-order clothes, straw hat, nasal voice, folding kodak slung over shoulder, a very George M. Cohan sort of newspaper man*]

PHILLPOTS

Who said trouble? Riots, masses, poisonous gas, I'm for it!

POP PRATT

[to COHEN]

Did you say there was gonna be another war?

PHILLPOTS

Sure, why not?

COHEN

Stranger here?

PHILLPOTS

I belong everywhere.

COHEN

Well you look like you thought you was a devil with the women.

PHILLPOTS

Confidentially, I am.

COHEN

A newspaper feller!

PSINSKI

Treat him good, he owns us all, the guy that holds the wires . . . he laughs, he makes death, he telegraphs——

COHEN

Umph!

PHILLPOTS

That's me, Hiram the History Kid.

[*Inside the house SADIE has started the phonograph, a nasal voice singing*]

“There's no land so grand as my land
From California to Manhattan Isle.”

[PHILLPOTS *continues to speak*]

Say, I've covered the map, steamers, trams, aeroplanes, camels, round and round in the path of war and all the time I had . . .

[*The phonograph goes on*]

“Make me lose those . . . Yankee Doodle Blues.”

[PHILLPOTS *joins in, singing*]

“I had those, yes I had those . . .
Yankee Doodle Blues . . .”

[*The phonograph starts again at the beginning, SADIE dances out of store clapping her hands*]

SADIE

I was makin' music an' I heard a voice that answered,
heard a stranger's voice.

[*PHILLPOTS and SADIE look at each other smiling,
stepping in time to the music*]

PHILLPOTS

Is this my dance?

[*He and SADIE dance. POP PRATT delighted, pounds
stick and jigs in a circle*]

COHEN

Here . . . here!

[*He tries to stop them. The first time he fails, but
on next round succeeds in separating them*]

Enough is too much, young man, that's my daughter
an' you ain't been introduced.

PHILLPOTS

She sure knows how to dance.

COHEN

She goes out now an' then to a social party where
they dance genteel with a fox-trot an' a rabbit run,
but no fightin' or pushin', a social time would you be-
lieve it.

[*The phonograph ends in a cracked wheeze*]

PHILLPOTS

Are you one of the debutantes here?

SADIE

No Sir, I'm a good girl.

PHILLPOTS

You can't kid me little girl, my mother was Jewish . . .

COHEN

Welcome.

PHILLPOTS

And my father was Irish.

COHEN

[*suspiciously*]

Oh ho, is that so?

PHILLPOTS

Yes sir.

SADIE

What you doin' in coal town, stranger?

PHILLPOTS

What sort of a place is this?

COHEN

Oh there you ask somethin'. It's rotten! Look at me: I come up here from Charleston when the mines opened, it looked like a million dollars, an' I tumble into a valley where Death lives.

PSINSKI

Go up that big hill, see all the graves a' men died
sweatin' in the mines, little stones standin' like an
army, but there on the other side a' town a temple
built by a rich man with statues an' all—but go look
at them graves!

PHILLPOTS

I don't care about the dead ones, but the live ones!——

COHEN

A live town, a coal center, ain't it? . . .

[*He points to the picture on curtain*]

With a movie palace an' a rotary club an' a Ku Klux
Klan—but out here on the outskirts a' town the Hell a'
coal begins, all these little black valleys full up with
mines.

PHILLPOTS

Out of this the soul of America rises in a pillar of
smoke. It warms the heart of the U. S. A. all right.

SADIE

[*stands on one leg looking at PHILLPOTS, gaping with
admiration*]

Ain't he got the silver tongue though?

PHILLPOTS

Little girl, rose of the coal dust with olive skin, were
you born of smoke?

COHEN

Not on your life she ain't, I'm here to say it, an' don't you go give her no such ideas. What a place for a girl among all these foreigners an' rippers!

SADIE

What's a ripper, pop?

COHEN

A feller pulls the clothes off your back.

SADIE

Oo . . . I'd like that!

COHEN

Innocent ain't it? She's all I got in the world, I got money saved to send her to correspondence school, some swell place, y'know what I mean.

PSINSKI

[comes up to PHILLPOTS, looks him over thoughtfully]
Looking for trouble are you?

PHILLPOTS

If I don't find it I'll make it. What do I care for guns! I'm going to raise the lid off this strike, make it a national issue, put it on the front page, put it before Congress, put it——

[While he has been speaking all his hearers have suddenly taken to cover, made signs of fright and disappeared. PSINSKI to left, followed by POP]

PRATT, COHEN *and* SADIE *into shop*. SADIE *peeks out once and retires as a big dangerous looking man enters right*. CONNOR, the SHERIFF, *carries two large pistols, dressed in half Buffalo Bill style, high boots, black whiskers, a very big badge on his chest. He twirls the pistols in each hand in a way to terrify any onlooker. PHILLPOTS sees him and his voice dies*]

SHERIFF

[*roaring*]

Out a' my path stranger.

[PHILLPOTS *dives into COHEN's store*. SHERIFF *walks up and down dangerously, trying to intimidate the audience. Enter right a tall MAN IN A SILK HAT and immaculate afternoon clothes, white kid gloves, followed by BILL and MACCARTHY marching stiffly, guns on shoulder. SHERIFF swings fiercely on the newcomer. His manner immediately changes to cringing civility. He salutes*]

Yes Sir.

MAN IN SILK HAT

[*has a deep ringing voice*]

I wish to announce . . .

[*He clears his throat*]

Sheriff I have arranged to have the strictest coöperation between your deputies and the army. The Colonel is sending his men out on police duty.

SHERIFF AND TWO SOLDIERS

[*in chorus*]

Yes sir, yes sir.

MAN IN SILK HAT

Another point, Sheriff, I am informed loose women are hanging around the camp making propositions to the soldiers. People take advantage of these periods of disorder to commit nuisances.

[*Off stage the distant discord of the JAZZ BAND is heard again like a derisive echo*]

What's that?

MACCARTHY

It's them musical miners.

BILL

It's that strikers' jazz.

MAN IN SILK HAT

Gratuitous effrontery——

[*A shot off stage, and the SILK HAT flies off into wings, disclosing a shiny bald head*]

MACCARTHY

What was that?

BILL

Where was it?

SHERIFF

You get the hat, you chase whoever done it.

[*The soldiers hurry off, one on either side*]

MAN IN SILK HAT

[*clapping hands to head*]

Did it hit my head? . . . No, no, I think not.

SHERIFF

[*cheerfully*]

Why sure that's nuthin'.

MAN IN SILK HAT

[*muttering*]

I wish to announce. . . .

[*looking at watch*]

That is I think I'll just be going Sheriff, I have a meeting. . . .

[*He is so nervous that he leaves watch hanging on its gold chain. BILL returns with silk hat and a handsome grey wig*]

BILL

I found this too.

SHERIFF

Excuse me.

[*He takes wig and brushes it. It is very dusty. MAN IN SILK HAT claps it sideways on head*]

MAN IN SILK HAT

Yes I have a meeting. . . . Law and order, Sheriff. . .
 [*He hurries off nervously. PHILLPOTS runs out of
 COHEN'S shop*]

PHILLPOTS

Who was that?

SHERIFF

That's the President a' the Law an' Order League.

[*PHILLPOTS laughs. SHERIFF produces both guns*]
 Do you prefer to be tarred an' feathered or run out
 on a rail?

PHILLPOTS

Don't make me laugh.

SHERIFF

You're under martial law, we can investigate, search,
 enter an' strip you.

PHILLPOTS

Oh Sheriff.

SHERIFF

[*to BILL*]
 Search him boy.

PHILLPOTS

Don't search me, here it is.

[*He produces large silver flask and hands it to SHERIFF
 who smells it and takes a long drink*]

SHERIFF

[with manner of a connoisseur]

Not bad.

PHILLPOTS

Johnnie Walker.

[He takes a drink himself]

I want to get to know you better, Sheriff.

SHERIFF

[pointing to camera]

What you doin' with that picture machine?

PHILLPOTS

Do you a big service, put your physiognomy on the front page in fourteen cities, badge and all.

[He takes out handkerchief and polishes the SHERIFF's badge]

SHERIFF

[at once becoming very civil]

That's different, what paper do you represent?

PHILLPOTS

The best. . . .

[He unfolds copy of N. Y. EVENING JOURNAL. The soldiers salute]

SHERIFF

The open hand to friends an' a short gun for strangers:
Shake. *[They shake hands]*

They call me the Big Sheriff with the Big Heart.

PHILLPOTS

[*opening camera*]

Good, now look pleasant, point your gun—not at me, point it at him.

[*He indicates BILL. SHERIFF has struck a very funny attitude. As PHILLPOTS is about to take the picture, MACCARTHY drags in PSINSKI*]

MACCARTHY

[*roughly*]

I found this Sheriff, I think mebbe he shot the silk hat.

[*He throws PSINSKI down in front of SHERIFF, who with great presence of mind strikes an even better attitude, glowering on the man at his feet*]

SHERIFF

Go right ahead with the picture.

PHILLPOTS

[*smiling*]

Oh Sheriff.

[*He clicks camera and comes forward*]

What's this man done?

MACCARTHY

He took a pot shot at the Law an' Order League.

PSINSKI

[*starting to get up*]

It's a lie, I got no gun, I do not shoot.

SHERIFF

Go on, speak up.

PSINSKI

I believe in the brotherhood of man.

SHERIFF

Knock him down, boys.

MACCARTHY

[*bored*]

All right.

[*He does so, using butt end of rifle expertly*]

PHILLPOTS

Say is this legal?

SHERIFF

Certainly.

[*SHERIFF produces large pair of spectacles and sheaf of legal looking papers with the air of a magician taking rabbits out of a hat*]

Search him boys, in the name a' the Law.

[*BILL proceeds to investigate PSINSKI's pockets. SHERIFF fingers papers, reading*]

"Search an' Entry" . . . no that's not it. . . . "Summary action . . . can be applied to any person who talks, speaks, addresses, writes, advertises, states by word a' mouth by posted notice or placard"—well, you see how it is, we can make anythin' legal here!

BILL

[*producing things from PSINSKI's pockets*]

Here's a queer lookin' book.

PSINSKI

That's the Rubaiyat of Omar Khayam.

SHERIFF

[*taking it*]

One a' them Armenian Bolcheviks, we keep it for evidence.

PSINSKI

[*to the soldiers*]

You soldiers are workmen too, what for you come here to shoot down your brothers?

MACCARTHY

Hear him Sheriff?

BILL

[*holding up objects he finds on PSINSKI*]

One dime . . . first naturalization papers in state of Colorado . . . a letter in Chineese. . . .

PSINSKI

That's Polish.

SHERIFF

Well it's good evidence 'cause no one can read it.

[*BILL passes a picture to MACCARTHY*]

MACCARTHY

Here's a picture of an old girl.

PHILLPOTS

[*looking over MACCARTHY's shoulder*]

That would be his mother.

BILL

[*scratching his head*]

Even this dirty Pole got a mother, don't it beat all?

MACCARTHY

Looks like the mother of all time.

PSINSKI

[*fiercely*]

Gimme the picture.

BILL

That's all Sheriff except he's tatooed all over with crescents an' crosses.

SHERIFF

I reckon he ain't worth hangin'.

[*Off stage the distant tooting of the JAZZ BAND
breaks in again*]

MACCARTHY

There's that noise Sheriff.

SHERIFF

Them guys are at it again . . . well I guess we better break it up.

PSINSKI

The music goes on.

SHERIFF

That ain't music, I guess I know music when I hear it.

PSINSKI

It goes on, while there's a man left, they blow them horns!

SHERIFF

[*to soldiers*]

Come on boys, we'll see about that.

[*to PSINSKI*]

You know what's healthy for you, better leave town in just about two hours, get me . . . I know your kind, this ain't a health resort for Bolcheviki—where's that music?

[*The persistent rhythm of the JAZZ BAND off stage grows louder. The men begin to sway in spite of themselves*]

BILL

It's here.

MACCARTHY

[*pointing the other way*]

It's there.

BILL

Here an' there.

MACCARTHY

It's everywhere.

SHERIFF

[to PHILLPOTS]

You tell the world we keep order here.

[*Exit SHERIFF with BILL and MACCARTHY. The off stage music dies down gradually*]

PHILLPOTS

[*coming to PSINSKI with friendly interest*]

Are you going to get out of town?

PSINSKI

No.

PHILLPOTS

Why not? What's going to happen, I want the news?

PSINSKI

People in a sweat marchin' under a lot a' flags—it is news that?

PHILLPOTS

No, they're always doing it.

PSINSKI

An' fellers like you always lookin' on.

PHILLPOTS

[*waving newspaper*]

That's my job.

PSINSKI

You got a newspaper soul.

PHILLPOTS

Never mind about my soul.

PSINSKI

City feller ain't you?

PHILLPOTS

Well, in a way.

PSINSKI

A fool that walks on asphalt among electric lights, what can you know about people born in the dark, a lonely bitter people in the mountains, an' to them come a stream of mystic foreigners, the Pole the Greek the Italian——

PHILLPOTS

That's all right but they all turn into Americans.

PSINSKI

They turn into dirt, the earth is their mother an' she calls 'em.

[*Enter OLD MAGGIE hobbling along energetically, a bent hag's body and bruised wrinkled face*]

PHILLPOTS

There's mother earth now.

PROCESSIONAL

PSINSKI

That's old Maggie that they call the daughter a'
God 'cause she tells everyone they're goin' to Hell.
Say Maggie tell us about God, does he wear a silk hat,
does he smoke a big cigar?

OLD MAGGIE

[*simply*]

No he don't but the lightnin' is his sword.

PSINSKI

Don't that beat Hell?

OLD MAGGIE

Yes it beats Hell.

PSINSKI

God don't frighten me.

OLD MAGGIE

There's a black time comin', I'm old an' my eyes is
sore, but I can see things yet.

PSINSKI

What you see?

OLD MAGGIE

Ruins an' a bible as big as a baseball field spread over
the ruins to cover 'em like a mustard plaster.

PSINSKI

Some say she can read the future in clouds an' the inside a' dead cows——

OLD MAGGIE

Fools!

PSINSKI

[to OLD MAGGIE]

Don't you see a new light comin', a new sun risin'?

PHILLPOTS

What's that?

PSINSKI

The Proletariat.

PHILLPOTS

You don't expect me to fall for that bunk.

PSINSKI

I could convince you, you got some intelligence, come with me, I'll take you to a workers' meetin', show you the serious side.

OLD MAGGIE

Fools, fools!

PHILLPOTS

The old woman is wiser than you are.

PROCESSIONAL

OLD MAGGIE

I ain't so all-fired proud, I just walk in the fields
adiggin' roots.

PHILLPOTS

Are you alone in the world?

OLD MAGGIE

Ain't we all alone, walkin' wherever we walk?

PHILLPOTS

No no, I mean family, men folks?

OLD MAGGIE

There's been men I reared, but some died in the stinkin'
mines, some choked off the coal dust, others kilt in
some war a long ways off . . . only Jim's left an' he
ain't so much sittin' in the jail-house.

PSINSKI

She's got a daughter she lives with an' one grandson,
Jim Flimmins, in jail——

PHILLPOTS

On account of the strike?

PSINSKI

For the Proletariat——

OLD MAGGIE

[*screaming*]

I'll go mad hearin' them words!

PSINSKI

She don't know what it's all about, she just lives by
boilin' up things that cure fever an' make dreams.

PHILLPOTS

A witch.

OLD MAGGIE

[standing huddled in her shawl center]

I known this soil since I was yaller-haired, I raised
men out of it an' buried 'em, why wouldn't I know what
the green grass hides!

PSINSKI

Hides graves, that's what.

OLD MAGGIE

An' flowers spring where the flesh rots.

PSINSKI

[to PHILLPOTS]

Come with me, I'll convince you, show you the tent
colonies, show you where they live in pigsties an' barns.

. . .

*[He and PHILLPOTS exit together, PSINSKI talking
eagerly]*

OLD MAGGIE

[alone pulling shawl closer around her]

Fools . . . well I'll be gettin' on.

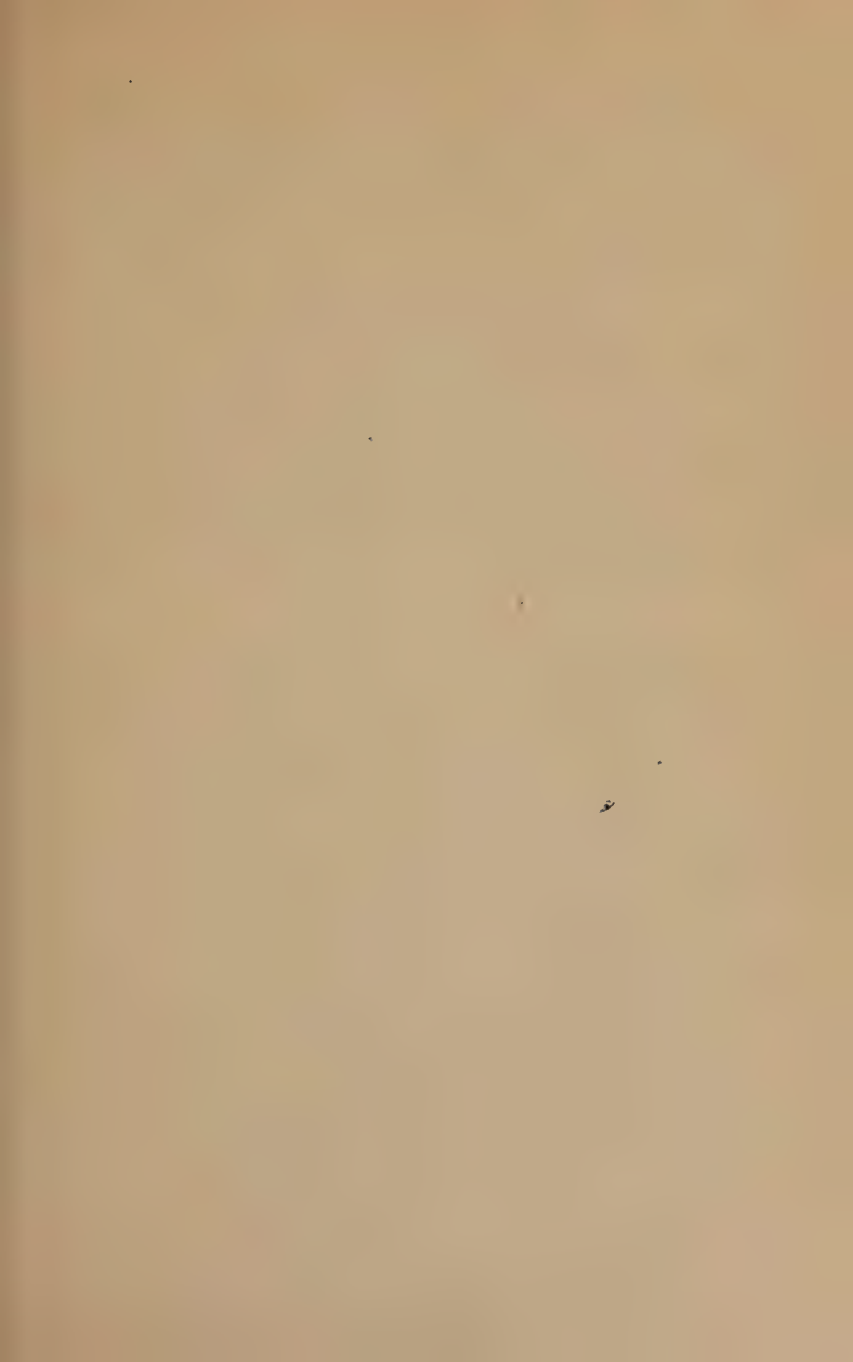
*[The lights fade, OLD MAGGIE in a blue spotlight
huddled in shawl, shaking her head]*

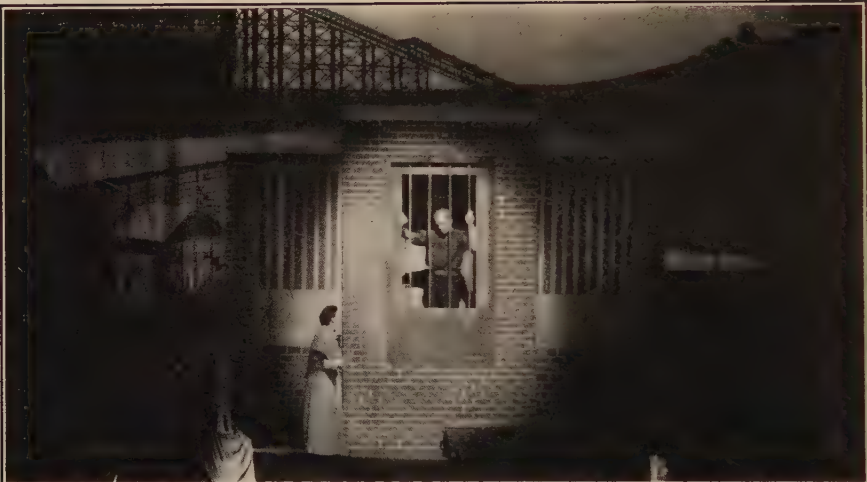
There's a black time comin' . . .

*[Blackness covers her. In the dark a single blare of
discordant music.]*

CURTAIN

ACT II





Setting by Mordecai Gorelik

Photograph by Francis Bruguiere

Act II, Scene I, of the Theatre Guild Production



Setting by Mordecai Gorelik

Photograph by Francis Bruguiere

Act II, Scene II, of the Theatre Guild Production

ACT II

THE SAME EVENING

SCENE 1. DYNAMITE JIM.

A dark curtain in which is a square window with bars five feet above the ground. From the window a red glow. Pale light and a shaft of moonlight center. An oblong box, evidently a coffin, lying on ground under window center.

[Enter MRS. FLIMMINS and OLD MAGGIE left. MRS. FLIMMINS is a woman under forty, tall and bony in her loose dress. She has an odd regal beauty, lines of age beginning to appear in her lean noble face. Her hair is frowsy. A sugary cracked voice, from which tense emotion flashes now and then like sparks]

MRS. FLIMMINS

Come on, it's late, you walk so slowly.

OLD MAGGIE

Can't no wise help it dearie.

MRS. FLIMMINS

This is his window . . . Jim . . . Jim . . .

[JIM FLIMMINS appears behind bars at window, a

tall man with rough-hewn face and muscles like granite. He stares fixedly through the bars]

It's your mammy Jim, are you all right?

JIM

Who's there with you?

MRS. FLIMMINS

It's your granny I brung to see you.

OLD MAGGIE

I hope you got peace Jim.

JIM

All I need is a chew a' tobacco.

MRS. FLIMMINS

Mebbe I can bring you tobacco tomorrow.

OLD MAGGIE

You'd oughter pray!

JIM

I sit here watchin' the rats, a rat is a friendly kind a' animal, got a funny way a' scratchin' behind the ear, diff'rent from a dawg, ever notice it?

MRS. FLIMMINS

You reckon they'll let you out?

JIM

They want me to rot here—but mebbe I'll take these bars an' twist 'em like wire in the two hands.

OLD MAGGIE

Better set still an' pray Jimmie.

MRS. FLIMMINS

They got soldiers here thick as flies, soldiers come from Washington train after train, they got guns with knives on the end, they'd stick you like a pig.

JIM

If I had some shootin' irons an' a bottle a' hooch I'd fight the army with one hand tied behind my back.

OLD MAGGIE

You couldn't no wise hold a gun an' a bottle with one hand tied.

MRS. FLIMMINS

He shoots his face but he don't mean nuthin', there's no harm in Jimmie.

OLD MAGGIE

It's sinful pride, God help him.

MRS. FLIMMINS

There may be trouble tonight, they been paradin' roun' an' threatenin' an' talkin' big.

JIM

I'd like to be in a fight.

MRS. FLIMMINS

Never mind Jim, when the strike's over they'll let you out an' we'll go to Philadelphia or New York.

PROCESSIONAL

JIM

Where do you reckon to git money for that?

MRS. FLIMMINS

I'll manage.

JIM

When you an' the old girl ain't got no food for your face nor a roof in the rain.

MRS. FLIMMINS

We're right comfortable, Jim, in that old barn on Mullins' hill.

JIM

A pigsty that's what it is.

MRS. FLIMMINS

I cleaned it up kind a' neat.

JIM

Rain comes in don't it?

MRS. FLIMMINS

There's cracks where the sun shines through an' the moon——

JIM

That's no place for a man's mother.

OLD MAGGIE

Home is where the heart is.

JIM

God help us!

MRS. FLIMMINS

Some day you'll be rich in New York, Jim.

JIM

I won't never see New York, I won't never see nuthin' but these dirty walls no biggern' the sides of a grave.

OLD MAGGIE

I brung men an' wimmin into the world till my old sides was sore, an' they died, exceptin' only you . . . you stand there lookin' out into the night.

MRS. FLIMMINS

It don't do no good to cry about it, I'll get you tobacco tomorrow Jim.

JIM

Mebbe I won't be here tomorrow.

MRS. FLIMMINS

What you mean?

JIM

I dunno, never mind.

MRS. FLIMMINS

What you so hot about?

OLD MAGGIE

Better pray Jim.

MRS. FLIMMINS

Go home ma, an' pray yourself, I got errands to do.

OLD MAGGIE

You better come home with me, Euphemia.

MRS. FLIMMINS

I got other business——

OLD MAGGIE

I'm afraid.

MRS. FLIMMINS

You ain't scared a' the dark are you?

OLD MAGGIE

T'ain't that, it's people makin' mischief in the night, monkey-doins', sin an' capers . . . they call Yoohoo Yoohoo in the shadows—why ain't men got nuthin' better to do but kill an' drink an' chase wimmin folk?

MRS. FLIMMINS

They've always done that.

OLD MAGGIE

What makes 'em do it?

MRS. FLIMMINS

The moon, I guess.

JIM

Yes, an' corn liquor.

OLD MAGGIE

An' if they get to fightin' . . .

MRS. FLIMMINS

You just head straight for home an' nobuddy will touch you, toddle along, ma.

OLD MAGGIE

Don't be late like you been these last nights, I don't like to think a' you out alone.

MRS. FLIMMINS

Oh I guess I can take care a' myself.

OLD MAGGIE

[*as she goes*]

I'm goin' then but try to come home quick, Euphemia.

[*OLD MAGGIE exits*]

MRS. FLIMMINS

[*starts to leave and turns back*]

Goodnight Jim.

JIM

Goodnight ma.

MRS. FLIMMINS

Your granny's a terror, she's too old, always talkin'.

JIM

She'll die soon.

PROCESSIONAL

MRS. FLIMMINS

Might be better.

[*Exit* MRS. FLIMMINS. JIM makes sure no one is outside his window, then he starts to file at the bars, a regular grating noise. Enter left RASTUS with his banjo singing. The rasping sound stops]

RASTUS

[*stands against the curtain crooning the unvarying blues tune*]

"I got them Bow Wow Blues

'Cause they treats me like a dawg . . ."

[*He howls like a dog*]

JIM

Who's there?

RASTUS

[*continuing to thrum banjo*]

One lonesome nigger Boss, wid a heart full a' care an' desecration.

JIM

What you doin' roun' this jail?

RASTUS

I wants to get in, wants to lay me on a prison bed.

JIM

What's amatter?

RASTUS

Ma woman done me wrong, she went to Alabama wid a Pullman porter man.

JIM

Always wimmin, Hell with wimmin!

RASTUS

Was it a woman put you in the jail-house, brudder?

JIM

No, it was like this . . . a bunch a' soldiers acomin' down a road, with a big flag——

RASTUS

[*strumming banjo*]

“Wid dem Yankee Doodle Blues . . .”

JIM

Me standin' in the road, can you picture it?—“Come on” they says——

[*He shakes his fist*]

So I come on an' they lowers the flag in my face, I was lousy with liquor understan', first thing I knows I was in the flag like a net on a fish spittin' an' kickin' under them stars an' stripes, down in the mud, I seen black couldn't see nuthin' else, I tore the guts out a' them stars I did—but it weren't wavin' in the sky that's the point, I says, Hell Judge I says, but the Judge says Silence he says——

RASTUS

[singing]

"An' now you got those yes you got those
Yankee Doodle Blues . . ."

JIM

That's how I got in but you ain't heard yet how I'm
gonna get out.

RASTUS

You ain't agonna get out.

*[JIM reaches one arm through bars and grabs RASTUS in
iron grip]*

JIM

Ain't I, nigger?

RASTUS

No you ain't——

JIM

[shaking him]

Wait'll you see me walkin' free.

RASTUS

Leggo me.

JIM

Ain't I gonna get out?

RASTUS

Mebbe you is.

[shaking himself free from JIM's grip]

Say brudder you got that strangle grip.

[He exits left. His voice off stage singing:]

"I got no girl neither white nor black

Ma woman's gonna Hell in Alabama

An' she ain't acomin' back . . ."

[JIM starts methodically to file again. Then with a mighty effort of his arms he twists out two of the bars. With movement of a cat he reaches the ground in one jump. He looks around ready to run. He pulls a piece of sacking out of the coffin and hides in coffin throwing sacking over himself, as BILL and MACCARTHY enter right]

BILL

[whining]

I don't half like it . . . that bunch a' miners is drunk an' you can't tell what they do next.

MACCARTHY

They got no guns.

BILL

Mebbe they got guns hid somewheres, just waitin' for a sign to raise the lid off Hell.

MACCARTHY

No no, these guys is good guys, y'know wot I mean, I was talkin' to one a' these miners.

BILL

What'd he say?

MACCARTHY

A good guy, said his name was Smith, he gimme a drink, I reckon if them an' us could get together with some booze there wouldn't be no more strike.

BILL

Mebbe that's so——

MACCARTHY

[seeing broken bars of window]

Look a' that window, some guy has broke jail.

BILL

Hello inside who's there?

MACCARTHY

A man busted loose.

BILL

Where would he be?

MACCARTHY

[knocks coffin with gun]

What's this?

BILL

Just a box for some feller rotted in prison. What'll we do?

MACCARTHY

Get the Sheriff, I'll go roun' the house this way, make it snappy now.

[He goes off right. BILL runs off left. MACCARTHY'S voice off stage right]

Help! Man busted loose. . . .

[Enter RASTUS left lounging the wall of prison. Confused noise of voices and shouting off stage]

RASTUS

Say brudder, lonesome brudder in the jail-house . . .

[He looks round to see the figure with sacking rise from coffin]

JIM

Yes.

RASTUS

[trembles and goes down on his knees]

I'm a good nigger an' I done no wrong, I paid ma dues an' I done no wrong, I kilt ma mother-in-law but I done no wrong. . . .

[JIM ducks down again. Enter left BILL with SHERIFF]

SHERIFF

What's that nigger doin'?

BILL

He's prayin' to his black God.

SHERIFF

Get up you.

RASTUS

I can't right well 'cause ma laigs says no.

SHERIFF

You see anybuddy?

RASTUS

Ain't seen nobuddy livin'.

[*Enter MACCARTHY right*]

MACCARTHY

Who was it Sheriff?

SHERIFF

Jim Flimmins is out.

MACCARTHY

Say what sort a' guy was this?

SHERIFF

Dynamite Jim, that's what he is.

BILL

Dynamite?

SHERIFF

A rip-roarin' son of a gun, a gun-totin' son of a bitch.

BILL

Is he a wobbly?

SHERIFF

He ain't a Democrat, that's all I aim to know about a man.

MACCARTHY

We'll get him dead or alive.

SHERIFF

It would do my heart sweet to see six feet a' him layin' here.

[*Off stage distant blowing of discordant horns. THE JAZZ BAND is at it again. It sounds slow and funereal*]

MACCARTHY

What's that?

BILL

It's them.

MACCARTHY

At it again.

SHERIFF

They call that music.

BILL

Sounds drunk.

SHERIFF

They got away from us this mornin', hid down in a mine, I reckon we'll make Dynamite Jim dance to that music.

MACCARTHY

Them fellers don't mean no harm Sheriff, they just like to jazz her up same as any man.

PROCESSIONAL

SHERIFF

I make my jazz with a gun, understan'.

MACCARTHY

Bill an' me will go hunt for this bird.

BILL

I don't half like it.

SHERIFF

You boys go down the road there under the hill, keep a watch to each side, I'll give the alarm an' then I'll join you.

MACCARTHY

Come on Bill.

SHERIFF

Y'know how coal gas is, one spark can set a whole mine to blazin'!

[SHERIFF *exits right*, BILL *and* MACCARTHY *left*.

RASTUS *rises from ground still trembling*. JIM *stepping out of coffin taps RASTUS on shoulder*.

RASTUS *tries to move away but his legs are rooted to the ground, he tickles banjo nervously*]

RASTUS

Seems like somethin' ghost-like jus' brushed ma shoulder.

JIM

Come with me.

RASTUS

I ain't so friendly wid the ghosts.

JIM

I ain't a ghost . . . yet.

RASTUS

Ain't you?

[*Enter PSINSKI right*]

PSINSKI

So you used the file I give you.

JIM

Thanks . . . thanks. . . .

PSINSKI

Now you are free be a man, don't let 'em get you.

JIM

Pretty near tuk me, who's there they says, I pretty near says "no one" I says—but I kept my jaw shut tight.

PSINSKI

If they catch you they string you up.

JIM

Help me then.

PSINSKI

You an' me is pals, stick with me an' you will be safe.

JIM

That's a go.

PSINSKI

[to RASTUS]

You help us.

RASTUS

I ain't helpin' nobuddy.

JIM

If I could get home to my ma she'd mebbe hide me.

PSINSKI

Don't be a fool that's the first place they look.

JIM

What we do then?

PSINSKI

Y'know that big stone house on the hill that a rich man built.

JIM

The Labor Temple?

PSINSKI

Nobuddy'd ever go look there, we go hide in that.

JIM

Them soldiers is wantin' me.

PSINSKI

Which way they go?

JIM

That there road under the hill, but they wouldn't never think a' goin' up to the top a' the hill.

PSINSKI

Surely no: what's this?

[He points at coffin]

RASTUS

We all know what that is.

PSINSKI

Who's it for?

RASTUS

Ma name ain't writ on it.

JIM

[pulling coffin forward]

I'll get in this, you an' him carry this understan' up the hill to that stone house.

RASTUS

Come again?

PSINSKI

Carry it, you an' me.

RASTUS

I ain't gonna carry no coffin.

JIM

You're gonna come, understan'?

PSINSKI

If anybody sees us they won't ever say a word.

RASTUS

I ain't comin'.

JIM

[grabbing him firmly]

You is, or I wring your neck!

RASTUS

[weakening]

I might be.

PSINSKI

If you was in trouble you'd want help. What you scared of?

RASTUS

I ain't scared, just thoughtful, that's all.

JIM

Come on then.

[gets in coffin]

PSINSKI

[to RASTUS]

Come on.

JIM

If you meet anyone make 'em take off their hats.
[Off stage ghostly music continues a funereal sound, slow and painful rendering of the Bow Wow Blues converted to a funeral march. They start to move slowly with coffin. Lights go out. Stage is black]

RASTUS' voice

Ain't it dark though?

JIM's voice

Keep right on movin'.

RASTUS

What's that?

JIM

That's me.

RASTUS

I thought somebuddy else was you.

PSINSKI

Come on, everything's all right.

RASTUS

Where are we now?

PSINSKI

Never mind.

[In total darkness the distant music sounds dimly. Then two other men's voices take the place of those of PSINSKI and RASTUS.]

SCENE 2. THE LABOR TEMPLE

[In the dark, men's voices]

BILL's voice

Oh God, if we only had some light.

MACCARTHY's voice

What you doin'?

BILL

Never mind.

MACCARTHY

A man's got no chance against black night, might as well look for a cross-eyed canary in an African jungle.

BILL

What's that about a cross-eyed canary?

[No answer. BILL calls out loudly]

Help, help.

[Pause]

Oh God, where's that moon?

[Stage lights up as the moon comes out. Drop curtain represents a marble temple with columns and two slightly grotesque statues painted on the canvas. A large door in this temple center. Elaborately carved inscriptions across top and under statues.]

Behind it the shadowy blue of the sky. Then a bright spot of moonlight falls front center.

Music stops. BILL and MACCARTHY at edge of stage right]

MACCARTHY

Who called for help? . . . Hey Bill . . . Bill . . .

BILL

Must a' walked off this way.

MACCARTHY

Weren't it dark jus' then?

BILL

I don't like the dark.

MACCARTHY

We got the ole moon now.

BILL

Wonder where the feller went to.

MACCARTHY

They say he eats the stuff.

BILL

What?

MACCARTHY

Dynamite.

BILL

What's this place?

PROCESSIONAL

MACCARTHY

We're way up the hill.

BILL

Is this a church?

[*He approaches it examining lettering on wall*]
Got writin' on it. "To the Spirit of American Industry, Coal . . . Steel . . . Oil . . ."

MACCARTHY

Banana Oil!

BILL

One a' these here statues is Capital an' the other one is Labor. "American Manhood" it says.

MACCARTHY

Don't kid me.

BILL

This is a queer place, let's beat it.

MACCARTHY

Here's the Sheriff.

[*Enter SHERIFF. He stalks boldly into bright ray of light center*]

SHERIFF

Well, boys.

[*They come to either side of him*]

Seen anybuddy?

BILL

Them trees throw funny shadows.

MACCARTHY

What's this white house here?

SHERIFF

That's no White House, that's the Labor Temple. Darius Swindleweight that was Governor a' West Virginia in 1908, he built that.

BILL

I'll say he got himself a swell house.

SHERIFF

A farmer, a hard guy he was too, that found coal where he plowed, so he figgered he'd like a swell white monument-like, to what coal could do. Now let's us get busy: you boys look over that side a' the hill, I got a posse beatin' through the woods.

MACCARTHY

We'll look over the whole damn place.

BILL

I don't half like it.

MACCARTHY

My friend's a little scared, Sheriff.

BILL

I seen some eyes lookin' out from them dirty shadows.

MACCARTHY

Cats.

BILL

[*relieved*]

Cats.

SHERIFF

You're a soldier, ain't you?

BILL

Yes but I can't help it. Say I just think I'll put the bayonet in my gun, might be handy if I meet this dynamite child face to face, wouldn't like to hurt him but . . .

[*He puts bayonet in gun*]

MACCARTHY

Aw you don't need that.

BILL

Can't tell. . . .

SHERIFF

You got whistles ain't you? If anythin' happens, whistle.

MACCARTHY

Rely on us.

[*The three exit, SHERIFF right, MACCARTHY and BILL left. Off stage a distant note of derisive music. Then enter right PHILLPOTS and SADIE walking leisurely admiring the moonlight. They stop center. Off stage sound of languorous jazz continues*]

PHILLPOTS

It's not often I get a chance to go walking with a pretty girl and the moon shining.

SADIE

I shouldn't a' come, I stole the key off'n popper's vest. Popper would kill me if he knew I was out.

PHILLPOTS

Don't you worry, little girl. I shouldn't be here either, ought to be studying this strike.

SADIE

What do you care about the strike?

PHILLPOTS

Are you interested in the labor question?

SADIE

Only when they get to shootin,' then it makes thrills up an' down your spine.

PHILLPOTS

There's a good deal of shooting going on in town, but it's all serene here.

SADIE

Oh it's quiet up here, folks often comes along this hill to talk . . . an' . . . well, you know, talk——

[*approaching him flirtatiously*]

You think kind a' slow for a city boy.

PHILLPOTS

I don't get you, kid.

SADIE

Oh talk . . . an' spoon . . .

PHILLPOTS

Well is that so?

SADIE

I don't even know your name.

PHILLPOTS

Call me Mr. Zip.

SADIE

Ain't the moonlight silvery shivery?

PHILLPOTS

You've caught a little of it in each eye, just a streak of moon!

SADIE

You got a jimjam line a' talk, Mr. Zip . . . Zip . . . Zip!

PHILLPOTS

Sadie Cohen——

SADIE

Call me Desdemona . . . why do you laugh?

PHILLPOTS

A great big black man killed her, is that what will happen to you, little Desdemona, daughter of the smoke?

SADIE

Say, you're a real gent.

PHILLPOTS

Yes, that's my trouble.

SADIE

If you want me try an' catch me.

[She suddenly runs off left]

PHILLPOTS

[annoyed muttering]

Oh they're all the same, now I'll break a leg on one of these tree stumps.

[He follows her left. Off stage the jazz rhythm changes completely, becomes funereal blues. Enter RASTUS and PSINSKI right carrying the coffin. They stop center]

RASTUS

Say, is this coffin made a' lead?

PSINSKI

Sure lead to keep the dead from dancin' in the cold ground.

[They set down the coffin left rear in shadows]

RASTUS

Why don' we throw the box in a river an' be done
wid it?

JIM

[*his head appears in coffin*]

Don't throw me in no river.

PSINSKI

This is the place I was talkin' about.

JIM

Sure there's nobuddy aroun'?

RASTUS

That voice out a' the ghost-box gimme nervous indi-
gestion.

PSINSKI

You black fellers is always afraid.

RASTUS

I dunno it just comes on.

PSINSKI

Guess it's in the blood, I can see your ancestors. . . .

RASTUS

[*trembling*]

Where? Where?

PSINSKI

A people that ain't had a fair chance, black——

RASTUS

Hush yo' mouth, some day we git a chance.

PSINSKI

Sure you will, the whole future belongs to you.

RASTUS

A black future: mebbe the coons'll be Kings, mebbe yet you see a black President a' the United States——

PSINSKI

Sure . . . sure . . .

RASTUS

A cultured nigger wid a good speakin' an' singin' voice!

JIM

[*standing up*]

What's them ghost noises?

PSINSKI

We ain't alone here, there's voices somewheres.

JIM

If I could get in a good fight I wouldn't mind so much.

PSINSKI

Sit tight, the time ain't come for an open fight, you understand?

JIM

Not so much.

PSINSKI

You're a workman.

JIM

If I knew what it was about, I'd take a gun an' fight
the world.

RASTUS

Who you?

JIM

Me alone.

RASTUS

I don' so much mind a daylight fight wid a razor——

PSINSKI

Wait an' learn, you must hide here.

[PSINSKI *turns to door of monument. From within
comes noise of a woman singing raucously*]

“Runnin' Wild. . . . Lost control. . . .

Runnin' Wild. . . . Mighty bold. . . .”

PSINSKI

There's someone inside there.

JIM

Who in Hell would be in that place this time a' night?

[*Men's rough laughter heard from rear inside the
monument*]

Some fellers drunk in there.

PSINSKI

Huh, I hear men's voices.

JIM

I could do with a short swig a' liquor myself.

PSINSKI

It's probably soldiers.

JIM

We better get away from here quick.

PSINSKI

Can't now, may be other soldiers in any a' them shadows: lay low.

RASTUS

Oh Lawd!

PSINSKI

What's amatter now?

RASTUS

Red hot ghost jus' passed through me.

JIM

If I had some shootin' irons!

PSINSKI

Stay right here, lay low, I'm goin' round, see what we can do.

RASTUS

Don't bestir yourself, I'll go see.

[He exits hurriedly]

PSINSKI

He won't stop till he hits Kelly's Pool Parlor.

[whispering to JIM]

Someone comin' . . . lay quiet . . . I'll be back. . . .

[Exit PSINSKI left. JIM lies down out of sight covered with sacking as BILL and MACCARTHY re-enter right]

MACCARTHY

I ain't gonna worry no more about chasin' nobuddy.
The Sheriff's gone in the woods, let him worry. . . .
I'd like to get a drink in me, y'know what I mean.

BILL

But we're on duty——

MACCARTHY

That's the bunk, tie it outside, when officers ain't
aroun' one man's as good as another.

BILL

I hear funny noises.

MACCARTHY

It's them drunks playin' music, the soldiers is drunk
an' the miners is drunk!

BILL

I don't see so much harm in it.

MACCARTHY

No harm . . . it ain't a crime to play music, not yet it ain't—let's go see them miners . . . when a guy's as stewed as them he's everybuddy's friend, this is a good town.

BILL

It's a tough place.

MACCARTHY

[strutting up and down]

Well I'm tough ain't I?

[BILL nods sadly]

What's the use a' bein' in the army excep' it leaves a guy free sometimes to raise cain when he feels it comin' on.

BILL

What's it get you?

MACCARTHY

I like the life, makes me feel proud.

BILL

I had enough, I have, what are we here for? Shoot down other Americans, ain't they as good as we are?

MACCARTHY

Can that talk, a soldier's got no right to think.

BILL

Makes you think, this stuff.

MACCARTHY

Better write a letter to Congress.

BILL

They gassed me in the Argonne, they jailed me for
bein' drunk in Haiti, got sick off'n a woman in Texas,
I got a weak stomach—it's salute an' shoulder arms
an' they kick you aroun'——

MACCARTHY

That's seein' the world with Uncle Sam.

BILL

I don' wanna march no more in no dust, I don' wanna
carry no flag, I ain't a pack-horse, I'm a man!

MACCARTHY

Stand back while we see who's this.

[*They stand aside right as FIRST SOLDIER enters left
doing a clog step*]

BILL

It's one a' the boys.

MACCARTHY

Hey feller, where you goin'?

FIRST SOLDIER

[*still doing a little dance*]

I'm off duty.

MACCARTHY

[*to BILL*]

Y'see, he's full a' corn liquor.

FIRST SOLDIER

Why wouldn't I be?

BILL

Listen, you ain't seen a dynamite eatin' baby that busted out a' jail tonight?

FIRST SOLDIER

[*dancing*]

Ain't seen nuthin' but my own shadow, but I gotta date with frien's. She ain't so much in the face, but the shape!

[*He exits into monument center*]

MACCARTHY

He's gone inside that monument.

BILL

[*reading from front of monument*]

"Labor . . . Industry . . . American Manhood."

[*scratching head*]

No I don' understand it at all.

[*Enter a SECOND SOLDIER in a great hurry*]

MACCARTHY

Hey you!

SECOND SOLDIER

[*staccato*]

Goodby . . . don't stop me. . . . I'll be back. . . .
Just gotta finish a piece a' business.

BILL

What business?

SECOND SOLDIER

Monkey business. . . . There's a skirt in there!
[*He starts toward door of monument*]

MACCARTHY

Say I'm in on that.

BILL

[*urgently*]

Listen to me, you fellers is all wrong, you should be
ashamed a' yourselves.

MACCARTHY

You'd oughter be a preacher, you ought!

BILL

No 'tain't that but I had experience, an' I love my
mother.

[*Enter a THIRD SOLDIER, a big hulk of a man chewing
tobacco*]

MACCARTHY

Hello Hank.

THIRD SOLDIER

Jus' goin' to see a party a' frien's.

BILL

You boys has got the wrong dope: don't you know ev'ry time you drink an' cut loose, you do wrong to your mother? Each guy got a mother livin' or dead ain't he?

MACCARTHY

Dead ones don't count.

BILL

Even in Hell a guy's mother's what made him out a' flesh an' sorrow, ain't she?

SECOND SOLDIER

[*touched, sings*]

"You are a wonderful mother . . .

Dear old mother a' mine. . . ."

MACCARTHY

Banana Oil! One woman's jus' like another, jus' a bag a' bones!

BILL

Are you callin' my mother a bag a' bones? I'll fix you for that.

[*He tries to attack MACCARTHY. SECOND and THIRD SOLDIERS hold them back*]

SECOND SOLDIER

Now that's enough.

THIRD SOLDIER

You're pals, ain't you?

BILL

[*shamefacedly*]

Sure, he's my buddy.

SECOND SOLDIER

Shake then . . . pals got no cause to fight over wimmin.

MACCARTHY

Aw s'all right, I was jus' thinkin' a' my ma an' how the ole man threw her out a' the house, good reason he had too!

SECOND SOLDIER

[*continues to sing*]

"Wonderful mother a' mine. . . ."

THIRD SOLDIER

Boys, we'd oughter be better men than we are. . . .
I'm gonna take the pledge.

BILL

Why don't you take the pledge tonight?

THIRD SOLDIER

No sir, tomorrow mornin'. . . . I'll feel like it then.

[*He goes hastily through door center*]

SECOND SOLDIER

[*still singing about his mother*]

“You’ll hold a spot down deep in my heart
Till the stars no longer shine. . . .”

[*From inside the house raucous singing of*

“Runnin’ Wild. . . . Lost control. . . .”

breaks in on him. He hesitates, then abruptly:]

See you later, boys.

[*He exits center, joining in the chorus of “Running Wild” as he goes, and his voice heard backstage still singing*]

BILL

[*querulously*]

They must a’ cooked up a big party in there.

MACCARTHY

Sure . . . there’s a whole crowd in there, I should kiss
a cross-eyed canary if there ain’t.

[*Enter PHILLPOTS right*]

PHILLPOTS

Good evening, where’s the fight?

MACCARTHY

What fight? Booze fightin’s about all you’ll see aroun’
here.

[*Chorus off stage singing,*

“Runnin’ Wild. . . . Lost control. . . .

Runnin’ Wild. . . .”]

PHILLPOTS

What’s that noise?

MACCARTHY

They got a woman in there.

PHILLPOTS

They have, have they?

MACCARTHY

Can you imagine some girl, jus' a spring chicken, tender an' soft, with come-over-here in her eyes, an' kiss-me written on her lips—can you picture it?

PHILLPOTS

Oh yes, that's what I think about.

MACCARTHY

Well, there's no such animal, not here there ain't, so me for a drink!

[*He exits center*]

BILL

They're all alike exceptin' me! I had experience, I gotta weak stomach.

PHILLPOTS

Quite a philosopher, aren't you?

BILL

Aw, bunk!

PHILLPOTS

I expected a big fight and I find you all boozing together.

BILL

A man only knows one thing: his mother's a good woman an' every other girl is a bum!

PHILLPOTS

But maybe somebody's mother is in there.

BILL

Bunk! Strike, bunk! Army, bunk! Wimmin, bunk!

PHILLPOTS

Oh I'm an artist at bunk myself, but sometimes it gets me!

BILL

Is that so?

PHILLPOTS

I'm a serious thinker I am . . . sometimes I get to thinking, what's it mean?

BILL

Hear them drunks an' that woman singin'!

PHILLPOTS

We don't know who it is, without eyes, without a face, to us she's just a voice, a kind of a song that's behind change and politics . . . hear it!

[The raucous woman's singing goes on, above the low hum of men's voices]

The jazz melody of a bad woman in a small town, nobody's listened to that or told it.

BILL

Everythin' means somethin' if you can only figger it out.

PHILLPOTS

Soldiers pass and a woman dances for them, laughs for them——

BILL

Gets their wads off 'em.

PHILLPOTS

It's History, that is——

BILL

Aw don't kid me.

PHILLPOTS

Men have made religions out of women and this is how they treat her, a mother image——

BILL

What?

PHILLPOTS

A dream . . . it might be a temple in Greece, they come to her to worship, it might be where the Chinese carved fairy-tales in stone——

BILL

Are you cuckoo?

PHILLPOTS

Thinking, that's all, something I can't explain—it might be in some old Hindoo twilight, where men crowd round the perfumed body of a woman, without eyes, without a face—oh it makes me sick!

BILL

You got wimmin on your mind, ain't you?

PHILLPOTS

Guess I'll be getting down to the telegraph office. Good night.

BILL

Hey buddy!

[PHILLPOTS *turns*]

About wimmin . . . don't let it get you boy like it got me, they ain't worth it.

[PHILLPOTS *exits left*. BILL *disappears right*. JIM *rises from coffin*]

JIM

[*stretching*]

A woman huh! God I could use her . . . hot dawg! But it looks like this gimme my chance for a getaway. . . . Been lyin' in jail thinkin' about flesh an' bones till it drives you crazy . . . drives you . . . mebbe it ain't flesh an' bones, mebbe some kind a' meanin' in it. . . .

[*clenching his hands*]

Gawd send me a woman!

[*Enter SADIE left. She comes center*]

SADIE

Stick with me Moon, help me find my way, 'cause I'm scared!

[She looks up and sees JIM, backing away from him]

Oo . . .

[JIM seizes her roughly]

Leggo me, leggo——

JIM

I heard your voice like callin'!

SADIE

I'll kick you, I'll slap your face.

JIM

Go on I like it.

SADIE

I'll bite—oo ain't you strong?

JIM

Bust your bones I'm so strong——

[Enter BILL right]

BILL

Who are you? Are you the guy? . . . Yep, that's who you'd be, dynamite, huh?

JIM

Mebbe so, mebbe not.

BILL

[*points gun at JIM*]

Well we'll see about that, I got you now, hands up.

JIM

[*releasing SADIE*]

All right baby, excuse me kid, run home.

SADIE

[*approaching BILL*]

Don't hurt him, please don't——

JIM

[*between his teeth*].

I'll fix him!

[*BILL is trembling a little, JIM approaches him calmly*]

You're one Hell of a soldier.

BILL

Don't you come no nearer I'll shoot.

JIM

Scared ain't you?

BILL

Well you know how a feller feels.

JIM

You guys is no good, ain't fit for an army.

BILL

I don' wanna be in no army.

JIM

Throw away your gun then an' fight like a man huh?

BILL

I can't, I gotta kill you an' I don' want to!

JIM

One a' us has got to kill the other.

BILL

Hands up or I knock you down——

JIM

[*shouting*]

Come on then!

[JIM lunges unexpectedly. They struggle. SADIE crouches at side. JIM wrenches the soldier's gun from his hands and BILL falls to ground. As he starts to rise viciously, JIM gun in hand jabs the bayonet down on the fallen body and wrenches it out. The soldier quivers and lies still. SADIE has watched intently. Now she faces JIM]

SADIE

I seen it go through him!

[*A sob shakes her whole body. Beating against JIM with her fists*]

Oh I hate you you beast! I wanna kill you. . . .

[JIM stands stolidly paying no attention to her. She runs off crying hysterically]

JIM

[bends over soldier]

He's gettin' cold . . . went through him . . . must feel funny to be stuck through . . . they'll hang me now s'all right to talk but I never kilt a guy before. . . .

[From rear comes a sound of drunken laughter]

That's for me they're comin' for me . . . "hands up or I knock you down" was the last words he said. What curse makes a feller do them things? Gettin' cold, his soul's gone up in the sky, his soul's asittin' in the moon, he had a mother too. . . . I want my mammy's arms 'cause I done a black thing, oh mammy help me now!

[JIM bends over the dead body muttering and praying. Again drunken laughter]

CURTAIN

ACT III







Setting by Mordecai Gorelik

Photograph by Francis Bruguiere

Act III, Scene I, of the Theatre Guild Production



Setting by Mordecai Gorelik

Photograph by Francis Bruguiere

Act III, Scene II, of the Theatre Guild Production

ACT III

THE NEXT DAY

SCENE 1. MOTHER AND SON

A dilapidated barn which has been made roughly into a place in which to live. A wide opening rear without door through which sunlight streams in, sunlight also filters through cracks in the dilapidated walls. Straw is stuffed in the cracks. One broken table center and two broken chairs. A lamp with red cloth shade on the table. One or two boxes scattered about. Right of door a tin wash-stand with pitcher and basin. Also a rusty stove. Pair of rickety wooden stairs without a banister goes up the right hand wall with a landing and a door at the top. Rusty farm machinery in shadowy corners.

Left front, an iron bed, and right front a torn mattress lies on the floor. Both of these are occupied, figures huddled under bedclothes. OLD MAGGIE occupies the bed and MRS. FLIMMINS sleeps on mattress on floor. But only the outlines of the human forms are visible, their heads being under the covers.

[Enter JIM and PSINSKI, their clothes torn, evidently

escaping. JIM carries gun. They anxiously watch the sunlit door through which they have come]

JIM

[muttering]

Home sweet home!

PSINSKI

We ain't safe here.

JIM

[looking at the beds shouts suddenly]

For Gawd's sweet sake, wake up!

OLD MAGGIE

I had a dream an' it turned to steel against my belly!

JIM

Home to mommer an' all the folks is under the blankets sleepin' . . .

[He shouts again hoarsely]

Wake up!

[MRS. FLIMMINS has risen from the mattress on floor gaunt in her frowsy nightgown]

MRS. FLIMMINS

It's the boy, it's Jim.

[JIM laughs, she comes to him]

You ain't hurt are you?

JIM

I ain't exactly hurt.

PSINSKI

They're after us that's all.

MRS. FLIMMINS

Who's this?

PSINSKI

I'm an organizer here, the Sheriff's got my number.

JIM

Meet my pal . . . Jake, meet my mother that made me.

PSINSKI

They want to string us up.

OLD MAGGIE

[Crying softly]

God deserts us an' the walls fall round our heads.

MRS. FLIMMINS

[Standing by the old woman]

It's Jim ma, open your eyes an' look.

PSINSKI

We run in the dark, we hide, yet it is a beginning, we start something that make a noise an' a smell everywhere—

MRS. FLIMMINS

Mostly smell—

JIM

[*scratching himself uncomfortably*]

Cut out that ghost talk, it's mornin', li'l birds is singin' in the trees.

[*Off stage a distant regular tread of feet is heard, monotonous, frightening*]

PSINSKI

Hear them feet.

MRS. FLIMMINS

Sounds like a train ashufflin' along.

PSINSKI

More soldiers comin' off a train, comin' from the station, comin' to clean the town——

JIM

That's for me, they're comin' for me, comin' to take me from my mammy's arms.

PSINSKI

What's amatter, it's only shoe leather.

MRS. FLIMMINS

It's a bad dream.

JIM

I know that feelin', sometimes I feel 'em in my sleep, guys bearin' down on me more'n you could count with their bloody feet swingin' wide . . .

PSINSKI

Left right . . . left right . . .

JIM

Some day it'll come.

MRS. FLIMMINS

What?

JIM

All them feet come to the door marchin' heavy, left right, an' our ears'll bust. . . .

[He sits down on bed, his head in his hands. The sound of marching feet dies down gradually]

MRS. FLIMMINS

[her hand on his shoulder]

Ain't no dreams no more, we gotta save your skin alive now!

PSINSKI

He'll be strung up if they get him.

JIM

I stuck a feller through.

MRS. FLIMMINS

You what?

JIM

[vaguely, after a moment's hesitation]

Killed . . . had to . . .

MRS. FLIMMINS

Nobuddy's agonna touch him with me here.

PSINSKI

Ain't they?

MRS. FLIMMINS

[*quietly*]

No I'm his ma . . . ain't cryin' are you Jimmie?

JIM

Dunno, you burn the strength right out a' me.

MRS. FLIMMINS

Never no harm in Jimmy. Didn't I fix up this barn real sweet? I had a nice bedroom ready for you up them stairs Jim, where the hay loft was.

JIM

Six feet a' ground'll do me now.

PSINSKI

What'll we do?

[MRS. FLIMMINS *pulls open a trap door center in floor*]

What's that?

MRS. FLIMMINS

A kind a' hole where nobuddy knows, quick both a' you go down.

JIM

It's dark there.

PSINSKI

We can talk.

[*At door rear, excitedly*]

There's someone pickin' their way across the field here, looks like a silk hat.

JIM

Go down first.

[*PSINSKI nods and starts down*]

MRS. FLIMMINS

I'll bring you a candle, you stay there mebbe a week, mebbe . . .

PSINSKI

[*as he goes*]

Good!

In this place I will explain the worker's place in History, the Proletariat. . . .

[*He disappears still talking*]

JIM

Gimme the gun.

[*His mother hands it to him. He brandishes gun and disappears below. MRS. FLIMMINS shuts trap and rises, goes to door rear, then turns to the old woman.*]

MRS. FLIMMINS

We must act like nuthin' was happenin', come on take your clothes, we'll dress upstairs.

[*They take bundles of clothes and start up rickety stairs.*]

OLD MAGGIE

What is it, are they comin' to take him away?

MRS. FLIMMINS .

They won't touch him.

OLD MAGGIE

Why did he bust loose, didn't he know you can't break law?

MRS. FLIMMINS

He's heard too much a' this fool talk about the Proletariat.

OLD MAGGIE

It makes a buzzin' in your ears, what is it? Proletariat!
It burns in your mouth.

[*They exit at top of stairs. PHILLPOTS and MAN IN SILK HAT appear rear and walk up and down in sunlit doorway without entering. PHILLPOTS is dapper and amused as usual. SILK HAT MAN carries a newspaper*]

MAN IN SILK HAT

Law and Order, that's the slogan today.

PHILLPOTS

You sure this is the place?

MAN IN SILK HAT

Alleged to be headquarters of these gangsters.

PHILLPOTS

I don't see anything.

MAN IN SILK HAT

Exactly, that's what makes it dangerous.

PHILLPOTS

I'll tell the world——

MAN IN SILK HAT

That's just what you're here for.

[*tapping newspapers*]

But emphasize the law and order side, don't send out these sensational reports.

PHILLPOTS

Sensational? I haven't begun yet.

MAN IN SILK HAT

The stock market will have a bad flurry this morning.

PHILLPOTS

Guess I understand news values. . . .

[*He opens paper, reads thoughtfully*]

"Plague Decimates China" . . . "Names Ape as Correspondent in Sensational Divorce" . . . "Ireland" . . . there's a green place . . . "Man Stung on Head by Wasp dies Immediately" . . . "Italian Woman Has Six Children at Once" . . . and they grow up to be stung on the head . . . that's news for you and this is the center of it where coal is made, because coal is power and power drives——

MAN IN SILK HAT

Remember the stock market!

PHILLPOTS

I should worry!

MAN IN SILK HAT

Stocks and bonds should be the main concern of a newspaper writer.

PHILLPOTS

Look out for me then, I'm going to make a panic before I finish.

MAN IN SILK HAT

What do you mean?

[PHILLPOTS *hands him a telegram which he reads*]

"Keep the wires hot . . . signed . . . William Randolph Hearst"! Well?

PHILLPOTS

My job depends on getting a political sensation out of this.

MAN IN SILK HAT

There's no politics here.

PHILLPOTS

Don't make me laugh, the threads of this strike go all over the country and you're the man that holds some of the strings, I'll stick to you like Mesopotamia fever.

MAN IN SILK HAT

Is this a threat?

[*Enter the SHERIFF*]

SHERIFF

I'm right sartain some of 'em is hid here.

PHILLPOTS

Well what are you going to do about it?

SHERIFF

[*pointing at PHILLPOTS*]

I don' trust him Sir, he's laughin' in his sleeve.

PHILLPOTS

Just among gentlemen there's no use deceiving ourselves, this strike is a comic opera, look at the Sheriff you've got!

SHERIFF

[*with dignity*]

Are you kiddin' me?

PHILLPOTS

You bet your sweet life I'm here to kid everybody. I'm the guy with the typewriter and I know what I know, it's to laugh!

MAN IN SILK HAT

Is this the place, Sheriff?

SHERIFF

Yes Sir an' I got the soldiers waitin' near.

MAN IN SILK HAT

Good, where?

SHERIFF

Over this way.

MAN IN SILK HAT

I don't like the atmosphere of this place, I'd feel safer with the soldiers.

SHERIFF

This way, Sir.

[*The three men disappear from doorway. MRS. FLIMMINS dressed, comes downstairs looks around takes a candle from shelf goes to trap door taps once and speaks in whisper*]

MRS. FLIMMINS

Jimmy darlin' . . .

[*SADIE COHEN dressed in crude red, dashes in rear breathless*]

SADIE

Ma'am . . .

MRS. FLIMMINS

[*Rises hastily*]

What is it?

SADIE

They're after him, they got the soldiers waitin' there.

MRS. FLIMMINS

What do you care?

SADIE

Your son, they're comin' to get him.

MRS. FLIMMINS

I dunno what you mean.

SADIE

[*desperately*]

Yes you do you gotta listen to me, it's about your son an' I want him——

MRS. FLIMMINS

[*pursuing her threateningly*]

What you want with him, little snip of a girl, don't you know nuthin? Was you born yesterday, are you a week old, has you been washed yet after bein' born?

SADIE

Ma'am, Ma'am——

[*But MRS. FLIMMINS goes on inscrutably*]

MRS. FLIMMINS

Has they sung to you in the cradle, has they whipped your backside——?

[*She stops for breath*]

SADIE

I seen him las' night, lemme tell you——

MRS. FLIMMINS

Is it important?

SADIE

Yes'm it's a message.

MRS. FLIMMINS

Quiet, stand back there, hold your tongue.

[SADIE *stands in shadow by stairs as SHERIFF appears in doorway*]

SHERIFF

Mornin' Ma'am.

MRS. FLIMMINS

Mornin'.

[MAN IN SILK HAT and PHILLPOTS *appear behind SHERIFF. Two soldiers lounge by the open doorway*]

What you men want in my house?

PHILLPOTS

Do you live here?

MRS. FLIMMINS

We had a nice home till the company threw us out, the furniture got lost in a coupla' big rains.

[*turning calmly to SILK HAT MAN*]

Nice mornin' ain't it? Have a seat, Sheriff.

SHERIFF

The men we want ain't far from here an' we'll get 'em if we have to burn the house down.

MAN IN SILK HAT

Tell her the facts Sheriff.

MRS. FLIMMINS

Have you time to take a cup a' tea?

SHERIFF

You got a son ain't you?

[*She nods gravely*]

Well he's a leader a' these bums . . . James Baldwin Flimmins.

MRS. FLIMMINS

He ain't never had the brain to lead nuthin' excep' a bottle to his mouth before this.

SHERIFF

[*produces spectacles and pile of legal papers, reading*]
 "Conspirin' against the peace an' dignity a' the United States, ambush lyin' in wait assaultin' beatin' bruisin' an' killin' an officer a' the law——"

[*SHERIFF's chair falls to pieces and he goes heavily to the ground*]

PHILLPOTS

Oh Sheriff!

MRS. FLIMMINS

Oh I'm so sorry, I knew that chair weren't so strong, did it hurt you?

[*PHILLPOTS laughs, SILK HAT MAN looks very grave, PHILLPOTS helps the SHERIFF up*]

SHERIFF

[*approaching* MRS. FLIMMINS *angrily*]

You done that a' purpose, wait till we lay hands on your son!

MRS. FLIMMINS

They all come home to their mothers soon or later, don't they? Wanna see him?

[*She produces a little locket around her neck and snaps it open in SHERIFF's face*]

Two year old, with gold curls.

SHERIFF

Aw Hell.

MRS. FLIMMINS

Now he's walked with a gun an' taken life, funny how they grow up! an' me always dreamin'—then he was old enough to work an' there was a war an' away with the flags flyin'—talk about a dream that turns to steel against your belly!

PHILLPOTS

Lived long in these parts?

SHERIFF

Descended from original settlers.

MRS. FLIMMINS

That's the Baldwins an' the Flimmins.

PHILLPOTS

American Protestants?

MRS. FLIMMINS

Church people, we been in these mountains a hundred years.

PHILLPOTS

You fight the soil a hundred years and this is the end in a shack tumbling around your ears.

MAN IN SILK HAT

American stock but there must be something rotten in it——

MRS. FLIMMINS

[*flaring up*]

Rotten yourself! Who made this strike? You did! Beatin' down the men till all the manhood in 'em was jus' liquor an' anger, you own the roads, you own the houses, you own the sky overhead—look at yourself in the glass. . . .

PHILLPOTS

A man, monkey glands and all.

MRS. FLIMMINS

I only wish it was you he'd kilt.

SHERIFF

[*looking at Mrs. FLIMMINS admiringly*]

She's got that red fire in the eye herself.

Mrs. FLIMMINS

We're against outsiders here, we're a free people an' we're against soldiers——

SHERIFF

That's the mountain way.

Mrs. FLIMMINS

Anyway, you're my kind, Sheriff, lemme speak to you alone, p'raps it would help——

[They are interrupted by BOOB, who runs in closely pursued by COHEN who is puffing like a seal. They erupt into scene wildly. BOOB breaks through the group center, then circles the stage, then runs down steps front to center aisle]

COHEN

[exhaustedly]

Stop thief.

SHERIFF

[producing both guns]

Come here kid.

[BOOB slowly comes up steps to SHERIFF who collars him]

PHILLPOTS

What's the boy done?

COHEN

A thief, a thief, there's twenty dollars in his mouth.

MRS. FLIMMINS

That's a great deal a' money.

COHEN

He sneaked into my store he picked a twenty out a' the cash register, but I heard the bell, I seen him put it in his mouth!

PHILLPOTS

Well turn him up and shake him.

[BOOB *keeps his jaw tight closed*]

SHERIFF

Open your mouth or I'll knock your jaw out.

[BOOB *opens his mouth wide*]

PHILLPOTS

He's swallowed it.

COHEN

[*Plunges hand in BOOB's mouth*]

Ouch he bit my hand.

SHERIFF

Well the money's inside him.

COHEN

Have you got a hammer?

MRS. FLIMMINS

Good for him, anybuddy fools the law I'm right with 'em!

MAN IN SILK HAT

[fuming]

This is really of no consequence.

[SADIE comes forward from stairs]

COHEN

What you doin' here Sadie?

SADIE

Never mind.

PHILLPOTS

Good morning Miss Cohen.

[SADIE giggles]

COHEN

[pointing at BOOB]

A thief, I always knew it and we caught him now.

BOOB

You got nuthin' on me who says I tuk it? Where is it? I'm too slick for you see! Wait an' see who's United States Senator ten years from now, that's where a guy goes that can swaller coin!

MRS. FLIMMINS

[laughing harshly]

G'wan kid, talk up.

SADIE

Ain't that swell to be a reg'lar crook!

MRS. FLIMMINS

[*to sheriff*]

There you are, take the kid to jail an' don't bother me no more, you see for yourself there's nuthin' you want in my house.

SHERIFF

I ain't so sure.

COHEN

How do we know what else he stole? Better search him.

MAN IN SILK HAT

A very reasonable idea.

SHERIFF

All right.

[*to COHEN*]

You hold him.

[*SHERIFF puts hand in one of BOOB'S pockets*]
Marbles.

[*Music plays off stage while the SHERIFF continues to produce articles from BOOB'S pockets*]

Hold him tighter will you? Jack knife . . . cigarette butt.

COHEN

What's that?

SHERIFF

It's a cent.

COHEN

Put it back he may need it.

SHERIFF

Chewing gum.

COHEN

Ugh, it's been used.

[SHERIFF produces from BOOB's *inside breast pocket*
a fancy girl's garter with big pink flower on it]

PHILLPOTS

The woman in the case.

COHEN

Did I tell you he was a ripper or didn't I?

BOOB

I guess I know about wimmin.

[One of SADIE's stockings is down almost to her ankles.
She starts to sneak toward the door]

MAN IN SILK HAT

Look.

[Everybody stares at SADIE who giggles embarrassed]

COHEN

[gazing tragically at bare leg]

Do I see what I see or am I blind already?

[SADIE clutches desperately at stocking]

SHERIFF

Pull up your skirts.

[She hesitates]

Up higher.

PHILLPOTS

Oh Sheriff!

[They see garter on other leg, it is unmistakably the same]

BOOB

Sure it's her garter, why wouldn't she give me her garter, she's my girl, ain't she?

[SADIE giggles]

COHEN

My daughter ain't frien's with no crook.

BOOB

Her an' me is gonna go dance on Broadway together.

SADIE

[nods]

We been practicin' them fancy steps, wanna see Pop?

COHEN

[pulling her away from BOOB]

No, I seen too much already: take the boy to jail Sheriff, I make the complaint on him.

SHERIFF

[nods and calls to the soldiers lounging by the door]
Boys!

SADIE

Don't you touch him.

PHILLPOTS

Now really, Miss Cohen——

SADIE

Don't nobuddy touch me neither 'cause I got my own idea.

COHEN

[*persuasively*]

Lemme hear an idea out a' my child's face before I bust it!

[*SADIE and BOOB dance side by side like a vaudeville team, and off stage music grows louder*]

BOOB

Her an' me will go to New York an' Philadelphia, ain't it the truth Sadie?

SADIE

Well I wouldn't care so much about Philadelphia.

MAN IN SILK HAT

[*muttering*]

Disgraceful . . . disgraceful. . . .

COHEN

[*gives SADIE a resounding thwack*]

I'll fix you——

[*SADIE hides from COHEN behind MRS. FLIMMINS*]

SADIE

Don't let him spank me no more, it hurts too much.

MRS. FLIMMINS

[to COHEN]

If I was you I'd go easy on this.

[*Off stage music stops*]

MAN IN SILK HAT

None of this is of the slightest interest to me, my advice would be to send children of this type to the house of correction, but there are more serious matters in hand . . . h'm . . . the immediate capture of this criminal, that's your duty Sheriff, you know where to reach me if you need me. Law and order, Sheriff!

[*He exits rear, PHILLPOTS follows him*]

PHILLPOTS

I'm going to stick right with you till you tell me all I want to know.

[*Exit PHILLPOTS*]

SHERIFF

I wouldn't arrest the kid if I was you.

COHEN

I make the complaint on him, take him before I lay a hand on him myself.

SHERIFF

Oh all right.

[*calls to soldiers, who have again retired to doorway*]

Hey, one of youse guys come here.

[*As the soldier comes forward, he comes face to face with MRS. FLIMMINS. He surveys her in evident surprise*]

SHERIFF

What's amatter?

MRS. FLIMMINS

You don't know me.

SOLDIER

No but you look like a dame that gimme a good time las' night!

SHERIFF

Is that so?

SOLDIER

I was drunk when I seen her before.

MRS. FLIMMINS

Bums.

SOLDIER

Who's a bum?

SHERIFF

The lady's right, there's no argument.

SOLDIER

Well I ain't startin' no argument.

[SHERIFF *holding BOOB firmly by arm, passes him to*
SOLDIER]

SHERIFF

Here's a package for you, take him to the coop, shove him in anywhere there's room.

SOLDIER

Pretty crowded now, but I guess he might fit in that closet under the stairs.

[*The SOLDIER picks up BOOB by back of trousers and carries him off kicking. SOLDIER sings as he goes,*
"When them lovin' arms is waitin'
When them lovin' lips is hot"]

SHERIFF

[*to COHEN*]

Now take your daughter home an' there's an' end a' it.

COHEN

[*to SADIE*]

Now for you.

SADIE

[*hysterically*]

No, no, don't touch me.

MRS. FLIMMINS

You better go with your father.

SADIE

Never goin' home, never, I'm goin' away, gonna find
a lotta men to gimme kisses an' diamonds!

[*She dances wildly center*]

MRS. FLIMMINS

[*Comes to COHEN quietly*]

If I was you I'd leave her alone, I know them kind,
lemme talk to her.

SADIE

I won't go home.

MRS. FLIMMINS

[*to COHEN*]

Go away, what she needs is common sense.

COHEN

You promise to send her home later?

MRS. FLIMMINS

Sure, she'll come herself, don't you worry.

COHEN

I don't understand it at all.

[*SADIE laughs and continues to dance*]

MRS. FLIMMINS

None of us can understand, it's like walkin' in a mist
with shoutin' an' strange words.

COHEN

Sadie . . .

[*Mrs. FLIMMINS motions to him*]

I'll go then. . . .

[*wiping a tear from each eye*]

Didn't I raise her good didn't I, with sugar candy an' a good lickin' on Saturdays.

[*He exits head bent. SHERIFF looks on thoughtfully sitting on bed*]

SADIE

[*Suddenly serious comes to Mrs. FLIMMINS*]

Y'see I don't really mean all that, I ain't so bad, but he wants to lick me all the time, I can't stand it.

Mrs. FLIMMINS

You don't know what you mean, you're a shallow little dancin' fool.

SADIE

I'm not, you wait an' see.

Mrs. FLIMMINS

Keep still, I'm not thinkin' a' you at all.

[*She goes to SHERIFF*]

Why don't you go?

SHERIFF

I'm gonna set right here till I get your son.

Mrs. FLIMMINS

What then?

SHERIFF

Then I reckon he'll hang on Lone Mountain danglin'
till he turns green with big birds peekin' at him all
the time.

MRS. FLIMMINS

[*Turns from him then turns back with determination*]
Gimme a minute to explain, lemme talk to you.

SHERIFF

Always ready to listen to a lady.

[*MRS. FLIMMINS picks up empty pail near door*]

MRS. FLIMMINS

[*to SADIE*]

Wait here an' don't you stir till I come back.

SADIE

Yes'm.

MRS. FLIMMINS

Walk with me to the well, Sheriff, I'll tell you what I
think can help. . . .

[*They go out together rear. MRS. FLIMMINS talking earnestly. SADIE goes to trap door and taps three times. She jumps back as trap door opens and JIM stands waist-high in opening carrying his gun*]

JIM

I thought you was my mother.

SADIE

[*scared*]

Stay back, stay back, I didn't think you was really there.

[*JIM laughs and rises*]

Don't, don't, someone'll see you, there's soldiers all roun', Sheriff's jus' outside——

JIM

Is he alone?

SADIE

With your mother.

JIM

I got a mind to kill that Sheriff, one more or less what's it matter?

SADIE

You must go back down.

JIM

No, gotta breath, that feller talks his head off, mebbe I could make a run for it!

SADIE

Soldiers is right in sight: your ma's tryin' to fix it, she thinks I'm a dumb-bell but I ain't, I gotta message. The men are waitin' down a mine, mebbe they come out an' help you, anyways they gimme this paper for you. [*She takes ragged slip of paper from dress. JIM scans it carefully*]

JIM

Ahuh.

SADIE

What's it say?

JIM

I can't read.

SADIE

[*Takes it and reads*]

"Hail the chief, we will strike when the iron is hot."

JIM

What's it mean?

SADIE

They heard you busted loose, they heard about stickin' the soldier, you're a hero they says——

JIM

[*spitting thoughtfully*]

I ain't so much.

SADIE

Mebbe they help you, they got pitchforks an' knives an' flags——

JIM

[*in a whisper*]

That dress is like a flag!

SADIE

Don't shout at me, they'll hear.

JIM

I ain't shoutin'.

SADIE

Yes you are, inside you're beatin' like a drum, a drum that says come here, come here!

JIM

Go way then.

SADIE

Why?

JIM

[shaking her]

'Cause I don' wanna hurt you an' I feel like layin' my hands on somethin'—

[He pushes her away from him]

SADIE

You're like you was las' night when you kilt him.

[She runs out rear scared. JIM hides under stairs as

POP PRATT enters rear hobbling energetically]

POP PRATT

[calling loudly]

Hallo . . . hallo . . .

[He pounds stick on floor]

Anybuddy here?

[OLD MAGGIE comes out on landing above]

OLD MAGGIE

What you want?

POP PRATT

Figgered I'd drop in keep you comp'ny for awhile,
heard there was a peck a' trouble up this way.

OLD MAGGIE

What you heard don't matter, don't hang roun', we
don't need you.

POP PRATT

Eh?

[MAGGIE motions angrily toward door. PRATT at foot
of stairs turns and looks out]

Yep, li'l breeze blowin', looks like fixin' for one a' them
thunder showers, but I don't mind the thunder so much
now I can't hear nuthin'.

OLD MAGGIE

You must go way, don't you hear?

POP PRATT

[nodding head]

All right let's set awhile an' keep comp'ny bein' as us
is the old folks that knows the meanin' a' things . . .
what's amatter Maggie, you gotta funny look in the
eyes?

OLD MAGGIE

Look at me then.

POP PRATT

A face full a' jimjam mem'ries: remember Maggie, the day Abraham Lincoln stood on the hill yonder with his arms wavin' an' his voice like a taste a' bitter almonds in the wind!

OLD MAGGIE

It's all diff'rent now.

POP PRATT

You an' me walked on that hill when your hair was yaller an' the moon was bright on your hair——

OLD MAGGIE

Don't talk like that, you old scarecrow!

POP PRATT

Eh? What's amatter with you Maggie, your jaws move but nuthin' comes out?

OLD MAGGIE

I'm thinkin' have I brung men into the world, am I a mother a' drunken bums? That's the Proletariat!

POP PRATT

What's that, one a' them new-fangled things for the bowels?

OLD MAGGIE

Fools . . . fools . . .

[*She exits above, Mrs. FLIMMINS and SHERIFF return rear. SHERIFF is carrying pail full of water*]

MRS. FLIMMINS

I tell you I could raise the money.

SHERIFF

[*indicating* POP PRATT]

Easy now, look who's here.

MRS. FLIMMINS

He can't hear nuthin'.

SHERIFF

He sees a lot.

MRS. FLIMMINS

[*to* POP PRATT]

Get out.

POP PRATT

I jus' stepped in for a minute. . . .

[*as she pushes him toward door*]

But yep . . . mebbe I'll jus' be goin'.

[POP PRATT *exits rear*]

MRS. FLIMMINS

[*turns eagerly to Sheriff*]

I'll give you money.

SHERIFF

I thought you was dead busted boilin' up roots to eat.

MRS. FLIMMINS

But wimmin always got ways a' raisin' money.

SHERIFF

[looking her over critically]

Huh! Where'll I set this pail?

MRS. FLIMMINS

You'll help Jim? I'll have the money in cash by to-night.

SHERIFF

I'll say you got a way with you ma'am.

MRS. FLIMMINS

I'd do anythin' for my son.

SHERIFF

An' supposin' I says No let 'im hang!

MRS. FLIMMINS

[flaring up angrily]

You won't get him, my son's stronger'n you, mebbe he take you by the neck, throttle you, shake you——

SHERIFF

Don't you fret ma'am, I know this game.

MRS. FLIMMINS

What game?

SHERIFF

Man-huntin'.

MRS. FLIMMINS

[suddenly becoming gracious, smiles blandly]

Try woman-huntin', it's better.

SHERIFF

I figgered you was one a' them prayin' kind, hot for God.

MRS. FLIMMINS

I am, I'm prayin' God right this minute.

SHERIFF

You sure look handsome shinin' like that.

MRS. FLIMMINS

Soften your heart Sheriff, let a little love-light in your heart. I'd do anythin' for a big man like you.

SHERIFF

Would you now?

MRS. FLIMMINS

Help a lone woman that's so weak with nuthin' but prayer to guide her.

SHERIFF

I'll drop in tonight, p'raps you an' me could take a li'l walk when the moon's out.

MRS. FLIMMINS

Guide me with your hand Sheriff. I got lovin' ways when I——

[*Enter MACCARTHY rear*]

MACCARTHY

[*angry and excited*]

Looka' here Sheriff, I'm in on this, have you caught the guy yet?

SHERIFF

What guy?

MACCARTHY

He done in my buddy, I want 'im that's all, want to wring his dirty neck personally.

SHERIFF

Don't get excited.

MACCARTHY

I'm all broke up 'cause he done in my buddy.

SHERIFF

We gotta go at this very quietly.

MACCARTHY

[*looking fixedly at* MRS. FLIMMINS]

Who's she? I seen you before somewheres.

MRS. FLIMMINS

Why not? I got more right in coal town 'n you have.

MACCARTHY

[*scratching head*]

Then you sure are diff'rent from las' night.

SHERIFF

What you mean?

MACCARTHY

Aw she's just sweaty now, but supposin' . . . just supposin' at night with flower water on her hair an' her voice like music playin' . . . can you picture it?

MRS. FLIMMINS

Is this house a street like you all come in to look me over? You want me to lay down for the army to walk over my body?

MACCARTHY

You ain't the same, an' yet . . .

[*turning to SHERIFF*]

She ain't so young but she got somethin' in her makes a ringin' in your ears.

SHERIFF

Then you mean . . . ?

[*SHERIFF and MACCARTHY whisper together. MACCARTHY laughs*]

She was up with all them soldiers?

MACCARTHY

In that marble house.

SHERIFF

Drinkin' with 'em?

MACCARTHY

Gettin' their wads off 'em.

MRS. FLIMMINS

[*interrupting tensely*]

No . . . no . . .

SHERIFF

Mebbe you're right.

MACCARTHY

Oh boy, I know it.

SHERIFF

She told me she had lovin' ways . . . an' it's my idea she got her son hid here. Well if she's that kind . . .

MACCARTHY

If the guy that stuck my buddy is hid here I'm gonna lay my hands on him an' then . . . then . . .

[*Mrs. FLIMMINS instinctively goes and stands over trap door center. MACCARTHY listens for a moment thoughtfully*]

Sheriff I hear a kind a' scratchin' like a rat somewhere, let's have a look a' this floor.

MRS. FLIMMINS

[*screaming*]

No there's nuthin' there.

MACCARTHY

[over the trap]

Looks like a kind a' trap.

[MRS. FLIMMINS tries fiercely to keep them away from the trap]

Pull her away.

[SHERIFF pulls her roughly off]

MRS. FLIMMINS

Listen . . . listen, it's true, I'll give you anythin', it was me with them soldiers, I got money hid away, I done it for my son, I'm a bad woman!

MACCARTHY

What'd I tell you?

MRS. FLIMMINS

Go away, only go away, I'll give you money . . . anythin' . . .

[MACCARTHY has opened the trap]

MACCARTHY

Guess we can bring home the bacon.

SHERIFF

Come out I got my gun on you. This ain't the one we want, but step out, you're under arrest.

[PSINSKI comes out. SHERIFF peers down]

PSINSKI

The jail house is better'n that hole.

SHERIFF

Nuthin' else down there, but we got one Bolchevik rat.

MACCARTHY

What we do with him?

SHERIFF

Hand him over to some people that treat him good!
You know!

[He shuts trap door]

MACCARTHY

The other one must be somewheres, an' we'll find him.

PSINSKI

I protest—you can't arrest me without a warrant.

MACCARTHY

My Gawd, did you hear that Sheriff?

[He sticks PSINSKI violently with gun]

Tar an' feathers is what this bird needs.

SHERIFF

Bring him along.

PSINSKI

I don't care what you do to me, but the workers'll lick you yet.

SHERIFF

Treat him rough, we been too easy with these guys.

MACCARTHY

That's right, they don't appreciate kindness.

[*Exit SHERIFF and MACCARTHY, the latter pulling
PSINSKI along*]

MRS. FLIMMINS

[*Alone still on floor*]

Jimmy, where are you?

[*JIM comes forward, stands beside her white with
anger, gun in hand*]

MRS. FLIMMINS

Jimmy go down there an' don't come up no more.

JIM

[*blankly*]

What?

MRS. FLIMMINS

Down, quick.

JIM

I can't ma till I get my strength back.

MRS. FLIMMINS

You mean?

JIM

You know what I mean!

MRS. FLIMMINS

What's it matter? It's safe for you now, they won't
never look down there again.

JIM

They called my mammy a bad name, suppose I gotta kill ev'ry guy calls you that.

MRS. FLIMMINS

But what if it's true? Ain't you proud of it? It's for you, it's the money, we ain't been eatin' so much here, but I put away my little pile, watched it grow.

JIM

A guy's sweet mother!

MRS. FLIMMINS

Waitin' for you till we could go away, to New York, where people live, where we'd go to church——

JIM

What do I care now?

MRS. FLIMMINS

[*passionately*]

You're my son, mine . . . this ain't goin' on, I'm gonna learn you, an' make you an' make you a man——

JIM

I'm learnin' what ain't in the Bible.

MRS. FLIMMINS

Oh you don't know what I'm feelin' inside me.

JIM

It's rot, it's decay, there's worms in us.

MRS. FLIMMINS

No Jim we're all right.

JIM

Every guy's had my mammy's arms!

MRS. FLIMMINS

We're up against somethin' we don't understan', somethin' black, takes a man's muscle an' a woman's flesh.

JIM

All right I'm gonna find out what that is!

MRS. FLIMMINS

If we could get away from here, New York, a big city.
[OLD MAGGIE comes out at top of stairs above, stands
on landing unnoticed by the two intent figures]

JIM

So's you can get more men, huh? So's you can walk on a big main street givin' the glad eye to ev'ry stranger?

MRS. FLIMMINS

Don't Jim.

JIM

Dirty sin, rottin' inside us.

MRS. FLIMMINS

If I search my heart, mebbe somewhere in me there was the flesh cryin'.

JIM

It's in our blood.

MRS. FLIMMINS

We're good blood Jim, proud, pioneers.

JIM

Well them pioneers was sons a' bitches.

MRS. FLIMMINS

They dug in the ground.

JIM

They got the sinful dirt a' the earth in 'em, all right
let the earth have its way then, my blood's ready to
spread on the ground!

MRS. FLIMMINS

[*clinging to him*]

Jim your father was a decent man.

JIM

Every guy's my father now, I shake ev'ry guy by the
hand.

MRS. FLIMMINS

We're all right, there's somethin' inside us, somethin'
stirrin'——

JIM

Hell stirrin'!

MRS. FLIMMINS

No no, somethin' good, like when you pray till it burns.

JIM

I got a feelin' that burns my stomach.

MRS. FLIMMINS

Las' night you kilt a man.

JIM

That's nuthin', but somethin' soft come into me, somethin' I hadn't known, what can a guy do when he's got that thing in his stomach stronger'n liquor?

MRS. FLIMMINS

Go down there Jim an' wait.

JIM

Nuthin' to do but die.

MRS. FLIMMINS

You needn't die now I've known how to save you.

JIM

Yes an' you're proud about it ain't you?

MRS. FLIMMINS

[trying desperately to calm him and explain]

Las' night I was proud, 'cause my body's strong enough to drive men even when I'm old like walkin' in a mist.

JIM

What do I care now?

MRS. FLIMMINS

Gimme that gun.

JIM

Get away from me, don' touch me, if you touch me I'll curse you to Hell.

MRS. FLIMMINS

All right, sometimes mothers an' sons is a cursin' matter.

JIM

I'm goin' out an' fight, ain't kilt enough yet.

MRS. FLIMMINS

If there's more fightin' to do, I'll do it, gimme that gun.

JIM

[*fiercely*]

Stand back!

[*OLD MAGGIE suddenly doubles up as if with a cramp, and rolls straight from top of stairs to bottom where she lies in a heap*]

MRS. FLIMMINS

[*screaming*]

Your granny Jim, she heard the truth an' she fell like a stone.

[*bending over OLD MAGGIE*]

She ain't hurt.

JIM

What do I care? I'm ready now, to the ash-pile with all of you!

MRS. FLIMMINS

[clinging to him]

Jim, I'm your ma, whatever I done, I done for you, you gotta stay with me now.

JIM

[waving gun] .

I'm through, I'm free now, Goddamn this house, I'll fight alone!

[holds up his gun and shouts in sunlit doorway]

Let Hell loose!

[Darkness covers the stage]

SCENE 2. WHAT HAPPENED TO SADIE

EVENING OF THE SAME DAY

A mine entrance. Drop curtain represents a criss-cross of bars and derricks against a dirty yellow background. The black opening of the mine right. Fading grey light.

[A noise of shooting and shouting off stage. There is rhythmic frightened music at intervals throughout this scene. A single shot rings out. Enter PHILLPOTS right]

PHILLPOTS

Just missed me! Say I didn't bargain for this, it's a real fight now . . . who goes there?

[COHEN appears left dishevelled and worried]

COHEN

What's amatter?

PHILLPOTS

The matter? You may well ask! The miners came out from where they were hiding and they're sniping from behind every tree?

[A shot off stage]

COHEN

Ouch!

PHILLPOTS

[supporting him]

Are you hurt?

COHEN

I ain't had time to look.

PHILLPOTS

The soldiers are driving the strikers into the mountains, they'll soon capture the man they want—hear that?

COHEN

Oi oi . . .

PHILLPOTS

You'd better go back home and put your head in a pillow.

COHEN

[pitifully]

Where is she, what's happened to her?

PHILLPOTS

Who?

COHEN

My daughter Sadie, who else is there?

PHILLPOTS

You mean she's gone?

COHEN

I can't find her nowheres, all day she is gone.

PHILLPOTS

[preoccupied, looking off stage]

From what she said, maybe she's gone to New York.

COHEN

Fightin' everywhere, how do I know somebuddy won't hurt my little girl.

PHILLPOTS

Well she's nowhere round here, that's sure, and you'd better look out for yourself.

COHEN

What do I care for myself? I will give her yet a weddin' dress with bells on it, I will find her if I have to walk to New York lookin' for her——

PHILLPOTS

A wandering Jew!

COHEN

A Jew yes, an' all of a sudden the curse a' the race rises up an' slaps you in the face . . . but wait, in the end we'll beat you all, a people cursed but with wisdom in the heart, a lawful people livin' in the law ever since Moses, we win in the end!

PHILLPOTS

You don't all do so badly right now.

COHEN

Say what you like but your children's children will be shoutin' oi oi, because we conquer . . . Sadie . . . Sadie . . .

[COHEN *goes away muttering*]

PHILLPOTS

[*Alone*]

No more shots . . . guess it's almost over, guess the miners are licked, guess they caught the one they wanted.

[*A shot off stage. PHILLPOTS turns*]

It's a girl, somebody shot at a girl!

[*SADIE stumbles in, her clothes torn, spattered with mud, her hair loose*]

SADIE

[*forlornly*]

Mister . . .

PHILLPOTS

Sadie Cohen . . .

[*holding her arm*]

This way, keep out of sight.

SADIE

Have they kilt him yet? Jim Flimmins, the man they're huntin' for?

PHILLPOTS

I am informed that they'll have him any minute now, he started things going, he ran through Main Street shooting off a gun, but they'll get him now.

SADIE

Sweet God . . . Mister, where you goin' to Mister?

PHILLPOTS

I'm going to get out of this before somebody shoots me by mistake, I've got the biggest story of my life, now I'm called back to New York and the quicker I get there the better.

SADIE

What's that light there?

PHILLPOTS

A burning cross, can you beat that? The Ku Klux Klan has got into the fight now, they must have come up by train loads from Charleston.

SADIE

I'm so tired!

PHILLPOTS

Where have you been? Why are your clothes torn?

SADIE

I tuk to the open country, I climbed a mountain an' I got all tore, but I was scared alone with the moon

an' the stars, I thought I'd go roun' the world but
it looked kind a' big.

PHILLPOTS

Better go back to home sweet home.

SADIE

[with passion in her childish voice]

Never no more!

[An exchange of shots nearby]

PHILLPOTS

Hear that, aren't you scared?

SADIE

[with a little giggle]

Not so much, it tickles my spine.

PHILLPOTS

I must take you home, take you to a safe place.

SADIE

Never goin' home!

PHILLPOTS

What do you expect to do then?

SADIE

You take me to New York with you.

PHILLPOTS

What?

SADIE

[fiercely, coming close to him]

Take me away anywheres.

PHILLPOTS

[shakes his head and speaks very gently]

Little girl, haven't you learned your lesson yet?

SADIE

I ain't done nuthin' yet.

PHILLPOTS

Don't you see the impossibility of running wild? I'm sorry for you but——

SADIE

Then take me to New York.

PHILLPOTS

I'd look pretty bringing you to New York.

SADIE

You gotta take me with you.

PHILLPOTS

What?

SADIE

'Cause I had a dream an' God come to me in a dream an' said, "Go to New York an' get a job in the movies——"

PHILLPOTS

[*shocked*]

God said that?

SADIE

I think it was God.

PHILLPOTS

You were mistaken.

SADIE

I gotta get away from this dirty valley, gotta see
pleasures an' palaces.

PHILLPOTS

Look at me, I've gone round and round looking for the
news that's blown on the four winds.

SADIE

[*in pitiful little singsong voice*]

Take me away from here anywheres wherever the winds
blow.

PHILLPOTS

No, I'm a careful man.

SADIE

You liked me yesterday.

PHILLPOTS

Kidding that's all, I'm just a poor fish who tries to
make his way by kidding people.

SADIE

Were you kiddin'?

PHILLPOTS

Yes.

SADIE

Well even if you were . . . somewhere there's sweet flowers an' violins playin' them waltzes . . . that's love music . . . an' champagne . . .

PHILLPOTS

[*doubtfully*]

Perhaps.

SADIE

An' barrels full a' real diamonds.

PHILLPOTS

Is that all you want?

SADIE

I want all the love in the world an' then some, an' then I wanna dance on my toes!

PHILLPOTS

[*softly*]

Desdemona flower of the smoke, you'll get what's coming to you, I can't help it.

SADIE

I'd call you my sugar-popper.

PHILLPOTS

My heart's breaking and you can't mend it.

SADIE

Go way from me then, I thought you was straight goods an' you're a fake.

PHILLPOTS

Be a good little girl.

SADIE

I ain't a good li'l girl, I won't be, I ain't.

PHILLPOTS

Listen, Sadie——

SADIE

Lemme alone then, can't you, I need a man not a dummy.

PHILLPOTS

Sorry.

SADIE

Beat it then, what you so sad about?

PHILLPOTS

Being a good middle-class man I'm sorry for everybody, but I never know what to do about it.

[*He laughs again*]

Shooting is all round us now, look here, I've got to get you out of this.

SADIE

You don't care if I get kilt.

PHILLPOTS

We've got to get across that field there and back into town, I'll see if there's a safe way, you stick right here where they can't see you, understand, I'll be right back. I'll see if there's a safe way.

[*Exit PHILLPOTS right. SADIE alone calls after him*]

SADIE

Mebbe I won't be here when you come back. . . .

[*Pause. She is frightened, uncertain. Shouts and shooting off stage. She kneels down pounding her little clenched fists against the ground*]

Oh God what'll I do? Sweet God where'll I go? Lemme go roun' the world, lemme ride in an aeroplane, lemme put smelly stuff on my hair——

[*JIM appears shouting as he comes*]

JIM

You ain't got me yet, not yet you ain't!

[*He almost stumbles over SADIE, stops short abruptly*]

SADIE

I thought you was kilt!

JIM

Not yet but soon.

SADIE

They're lookin' for you everywheres.

JIM

I give 'em the slip, they want me, if they knew I was here they'd be closin' in on me catch me like a rat.

SADIE

What you gonna do?

JIM

Die like a good guy.

SADIE

All them soldiers with guns——

JIM

All right . . . I'll get one good laugh on 'em!

[SADIE makes a wild dash to run away from him, he catches her]

Nobuddy can get away from here now.

SADIE

[struggling with him]

Lemme go——

JIM

[still holding her]

I'm the guy stands alone against everybuddy . . . me myself, understan'!

SADIE

That's awful!

JIM

Afraid a' me? You seen me kill a man.

SADIE

I don't care.

JIM

I kilt others since then, I hid in the ground an' then I went out with a gun, I walk like a ghost, you smell the cold groun'?

[*Shouting and shots off stage*]

SADIE

What you gonna do?

JIM

A black thing.

SADIE

I don't know what you mean.

JIM

You an' me huh?

SADIE

What you mean?

JIM

You'll find out quick.

SADIE

No I'm goin' away somewheres.

JIM

I can't go with you, gotta date pretty soon.

SADIE

Who with?

JIM

Coupla' hundred soldiers an' the gents a' the Ku Klux Klan—ain't you proud be with a guy got frien's like that?

[*Noise and confused shouting come closer*]

Them soldiers is lookin' for me everywheres.

SADIE

I don't like this.

JIM

What you want huh?

SADIE

Lemme go——

JIM

Tell me what you want?

SADIE

Oh diamonds an' silks an' a job in the movies . . . I got a hunch——

JIM

[*squeezing her arms lifts her off the ground*]

Me too, I got a drivin' hunch!

SADIE

You're so strong!

JIM

You know what you want huh? I can fix you so you won't want nuthin' . . . afraid now? I curse the mommer that made me! Wimmin is all bums, you squeeze 'em you bust 'em an' you got nuthin', I used to be scared a' wimmin but not now——

[a terrible determination in his voice]

Not since today!

SADIE

I'll be your sweet mommer!

JIM

Then I curse you too!

SADIE

Me, why you could lift me in your arms . . . if you want to.

JIM

Mebbe I want to.

[He lifts her up]

I can lift you higher'n that.

SADIE

Go on . . . hold me higher . . .

[He lifts her high in his arms, she giggles wildly]

JIM

I raise you high to the moon, I steal a barrel full a' diamonds for you, reach up an' pick a bunch a' stars.

SADIE

You're kiddin'.

JIM

I ain't kiddin' . . .

[still holding her in his arms]

Listen, feet . . . comin' closer, ghost feet . . .

SADIE

I see shadows movin' everywhere.

JIM

Comin' closer but not so quick, they think there's a crowd here with guns, soldiers behind every tree, they got me here like a rat in a hole, no chance to get away.

SADIE

You must hide.

JIM

They'll find me here quick enough, let them soldiers come, they'll get me in a minute, but you're comin' with me.

SADIE

Where?

JIM

[indicating the mine entrance]

Down there.

SADIE

Bluffin', that's all you are, ev'rybuddy kids me!

JIM

I don' bluff, not me, I'll fix you, I will. . . .

SADIE

No, no, I don' wanna, lemme go——

JIM

Let them soldiers come, I'll have my way first.

[*He carries her down into the mine. Absolute darkness*]

SCENE 3. THE MAN HUNT

[Voices of soldiers shout in blackness from either side of stage]

FIRST VOICE

Have they got him yet?

SECOND VOICE

No he got away.

FIRST VOICE

While we was waitin' for him at the front a' the mine
he sneaked out like a mole through a hole at the back.

SECOND VOICE

He done wrong to a girl.

FIRST VOICE

There he goes across the field there.

SECOND VOICE

Get him.

FIRST VOICE

Hunt him down.

[Shouting grows in volume, with drum beats and rapid rhythm of music. Then gradually revealed an open space suffused with ghostly light, across

which stands a railing of heavy iron bars nine feet high, grim and foreboding against a wan sky. JIM crosses from left to right, his arms gesticulating wildly. Then MACCARTHY and other menacing figures, some with guns others with torches cross following him. Soldiers come down through audience shouting as they come and join in the pursuit. MAN IN SILK HAT appears in an upper box with a megaphone through which he shouts like an announcer at a race]

MAN IN SILK HAT

Jim Flimmins has escaped! This man is an enemy of society; a beast, he killed men, he attacked a woman, sinner, moral leper, Society must be justified! They're off, the Man Hunt! Round and round men are unchained against him!

[JIM alone this time, his arms gesticulating wildly, crosses from right to left]

Stop him . . . he's in the field . . . hunted he runs . . . Halt! . . . Shoot! . . . The Man Hunt!

[JIM climbs grotesquely up the iron railing]

He climbs the big fence . . . Stop him! Over the fence he's safe, he's up to the top, over the fence he's free in the woods!

[JIM has reached the top of the fence. MAN IN SILK HAT shouts louder]

No. . . . No. . . .

[In trying to get over, JIM has gotten caught by back of his trousers on point of one of the iron bars,

*where he hangs in mid-air, hanging downward,
arms and legs sprawling]*

Caught by the pants, caught on the fence, he hangs like a rag on a railing, he hangs like a flag, a human flag, with arms and legs that wave in the wind, the flag of defeat, torn by the East wind the North wind. . . . They've got him now!

[A flashlight turned on JIM where he hangs sprawling in the air, a figure of grotesque defeat. Points of guns bristle in a circle round him on the edge of the light. Blare of music]

CURTAIN

ACT IV



Setting by Mordecai Gorelik

Photograph by Francis Bruguiere

Act IV of the Theatre Guild Production



Setting by Mordecai Gorelik

Photograph by Francis Bruguiere

Act IV of the Theatre Guild Production

ACT IV

SIX MONTHS LATER

THE JAZZ WEDDING

*A hilltop above the town. It is just before dawn.
Trees and bushes are outlined blackly against the
sky.*

[*Enter* MRS. FLIMMINS and SADIE]

MRS. FLIMMINS

Come on child, no use cryin'.

SADIE

Ain't cryin', I'm laughin'.

MRS. FLIMMINS

Sounds the same.

SADIE

Jus' thinkin', where do we go from here?

[MRS. FLIMMINS *is silent*]

Look . . . look you can see it plain.

MRS. FLIMMINS

They've driven us out, it's burnin' up an' that's an end
a' it, we was real cosy in that barn.

SADIE

Yes ma'am.

MRS. FLIMMINS

Burn up mem'ries.

SADIE

It's an end a' us.

MRS. FLIMMINS

Not yet it ain't . . . but I dunno where to turn. . . .
The Sheriff's one a' the Klan himself, if we go into town
he'll catch us an' hand us over to 'em.

SADIE

We *got* to go somewheres.

MRS. FLIMMINS

How'd you know we have? Mebbe they save us the
trouble—I tell you they hate us all.

SADIE

Why should they hurt us?

MRS. FLIMMINS

They burned the shack, ain't they?

SADIE

But why . . . I don't see why. . . .

MRS. FLIMMINS

Don't keep askin' why like your brain was full a' soap
bubbles.

SADIE

Yes ma'am——

MRS. FLIMMINS

Don't yes me like that, if you hadn't said yes when you shouldn't you wouldn't be in this pickle now.

SADIE

I didn't say nuthin', it jus' happened.

MRS. FLIMMINS

[with a harsh laugh]

I know my son, I know his way.

SADIE

I don't care.

MRS. FLIMMINS

Carryin' a baby inside you without a name.

SADIE

[laughing softly]

I don't care.

MRS. FLIMMINS

You'll care when the Klan get you an' punish you for bein' bad.

SADIE

They're after you too, they call you bad names, kids throw stones at you!

MRS. FLIMMINS

I'm diff'rent, I *know* what I do, I ain't a little sap-head fool like you.

SADIE

If I was somewheres else where people didn't know.

MRS. FLIMMINS

Mebbe they'll put you on a train after they get through with you.

SADIE

The men in sheets?

MRS. FLIMMINS

We got no money to get away, all the men that might help 'us has left the country.

SADIE

There's my pop.

MRS. FLIMMINS

He threw you out.

SADIE

He might help us now.

MRS. FLIMMINS

He can't: what they won't do to him! A jew store-keeper is what these people eat for breakfast, wait an' see!

SADIE

They mustn't touch me till it's born, they must let me alone till it's born.

[MRS. FLIMMINS *laughs harshly*]

I want it, I want it.

MRS. FLIMMINS

What makes wimmin do it?

SADIE

[*crooning half to herself*]

Kind a' feelin' stealin' over you.

MRS. FLIMMINS

Aw shut up, don't sing to yourself like that, I'm sick a' hearin' you sing an' say you don't care, I'm sorry I tuk you in.

SADIE

You've treated me white all right.

MRS. FLIMMINS

Well it ain't for you, don't think that, it's for Jim an' what he done to you.

SADIE

A guy as strong as an ox, a guy that burned like liquor!

MRS. FLIMMINS

He wouldn't accept things, wanted to fight all the time, so they strung him to a sour apple tree——

SADIE

Don't talk about it, don't——

MRS. FLIMMINS

I ain't done hopin'.

SADIE

He's mine as well as yours now.

MRS. FLIMMINS

Don't you say that: you think he'd care if he come back now walkin' free? He'd call you a fool an' laugh it off.

SADIE

He won't come back.

MRS. FLIMMINS

They never found the body . . . strung to that tree it was, an' it jus' disappeared.

SADIE

He's gone six months now.

MRS. FLIMMINS

I got a feelin' perhaps he'll come back. . . . Pray hard, pray with all you got in you, an' mebbe he'll come.

[*Funereal music off stage*]

I hear those Kluxers.

SADIE

They're after us, they want us.

MRS. FLIMMINS

Come this way.

[*As they move right an enormously tall man appears rear, in Ku Klux regalia, looking eight feet high. He smokes a large cigar from which come colored sparks when he puffs it. The KING KLEAGLE is of course another incarnation of the MAN IN THE SILK HAT. MRS. FLIMMINS and SADIE hide in shadows right. Funereal music grows louder, and a strange double procession comes down the aisles of the theatre. These are the KLAN members, in robes, masks and full regalia, the man at the head of one line carrying a cross, at the head of the other line an American flag. They assemble about the commanding figure of the KING KLEAGLE center. He motions right, two members of the KLAN hurry off, and reappear dragging SADIE and MRS. FLIMMINS, whom they throw roughly to ground at front of stage*]

MRS. FLIMMINS

Leggo me, leggo. . . .

KING KLEAGLE

You will await judgment in your turn.

[*The KLANSMEN point accusing fingers at the two women*]

MRS. FLIMMINS

Judgment! You cowards! You're a bunch a' old wimmin yourselves.

[*SADIE screams*]

Let that little girl alone, she done nuthin' to you——
 [*The KING KLEAGLE motions to have MRS. FLIMMINS removed. She is dragged away right, and SADIE remains on her knees front center*]

KING KLEAGLE

[*in a deep false voice sounding as if it came from Heaven*]

Kleagles, wizards, goblins, gathered in this Kloncilium!
 [*They all face the KING KLEAGLE with arms outstretched and the whole group chants in answer*]

RESPONSIVE CHANT

Glory . . . glory . . . Halleluliah. . . .

KING KLEAGLE

We gather this night to protect morals.

[*The group grumble and grunt ominously*]

Native-born Americans, Patriotic Protestants, regular citizens.

RESPONSIVE CHANT

Glory . . . Glory . . .

KING KLEAGLE

Have you taken the oath to exterminate foreigners?

RESPONSIVE CHANT

God's will be done!

KING KLEAGLE

Are the tar and feathers ready?

RESPONSIVE CHANT

God's will be done!

KING KLEAGLE

Are the guns and knives on hand?

RESPONSIVE CHANT

[very loud]

God's will be done!

KING KLEAGLE

Clean up the dirty foreigners, make 'em kiss the flag!

Skin the Jews, lynch the niggers, make 'em kiss the flag!

RESPONSIVE CHANT

[quite breathless and with a good deal of grunting]

Halleluliah . . . Halleluliah . . .

KING KLEAGLE

Order.

[Silence]

I wish to announec, entire Congress of the United States
joined the Ku Klux Klan last night.

RESPONSIVE CHANT

*[The whole crowd point fingers directly at audience and
shout]*

Halleluliah!

KING KLEAGLE

We gather in holy judgment, moral judgment. . . .

First case! Name?

[White figures in circle sway and chorus answers]

RESPONSIVE CHANT

Sadie Cohen . . . Sadie Cohen . . . Sadie Cohen . . .

[SADIE *seeing them sway sways too, standing on one leg
and then on the other*]

KING KLEAGLE

For six months she has embarrassed the community by
her appearance and manners.

FIRST GOBLIN

[*stepping forward*]

Look at her dance, look at her sway.

SADIE

I can't help it.

[*They all begin to sway more emphatically*]

SECOND GOBLIN

[*stepping out*]

She's a Jazz kid.

FIRST GOBLIN

Got a Jazz bug.

KING KLEAGLE

It's outrageous!

FIRST GOBLIN

It's contagious!

LOW CHANTING

Glory . . . Glory . . .

KING KLEAGLE

Look at her condition! It's unfortunate.

FIRST GOBLIN

It's contortionate!

KING KLEAGLE

It's disreputable.

SADIE

[*waving arms*]

Ghosts . . . ghosts go away. . . .

[*And she tries to find a way out of the circle, but they surround her swaying. KING KLEAGLE looms above her importantly*]

KING KLEAGLE

Outraged womanhood!

A VOICE

Halleluliah . . .

[*hushed by his companions*]

KING KLEAGLE

We'll teach her to be outraged, we'll lash the devil out of her.

SADIE

I'm awalkin' in the dark, I ain't goin' home no more, my father cried an' swore. . . .

[*half sings in crooning voice*]

He sighed an' he cried an' he pretty near died. . . .

[*She weaves in and out among the masked figures*]

PROCESSIONAL

RESPONSIVE CHANT

[*picking up the refrain of a well-known song*]

“For the loss of her honor and her pride!”

[*They all suddenly point at SADIE and shout*]

Shame!

SADIE

I ain't ashamed, I'm glad.

[*Sudden silence. All the members of the KLAN stop stock still*]

I'm the glad girl, I don't care.

[*KING KLEAGLE stretches out his arms, touching flag and cross on either side of him. Both light up, the cross outlined in electricity, and a red white and blue cluster on flag pole. SADIE, scared, sinks down on knees center*]

KING KLEAGLE

She's walking in the dark, the cross and the flag will save her, we must give her Christian punishment.

[*They all kneel*]

RESPONSIVE CHANT

[*in a whisper*]

“ 'Cause she's walkin' in the dark!”

[*PHILLPOTS enters right, pushes the kneeling men out of his path so that they all fall on top of one another and stands protectingly by SADIE*]

PHILLPOTS

You will will you? A lot of men picking on one little girl! Take a fellow your own size.

[looking up at KING KLEAGLE who towers above him]

Come on, who's going to fight me?

[But the figures only go on chanting round him]

RESPONSIVE CHANT

"There's a black time comin' . . .

Awalkin' in the dark . . ."

KING KLEAGLE

Back, back! You don't know what you're doing.

PHILLPOTS

I know all right, King Klux, I don't care if there's a thousand of you, cowards! You attack a woman because it's easier——

KING KLEAGLE

We protect morals.

[Cheers from the KLANSMEN]

PHILLPOTS

This little girl——

SADIE

I'm all right Mister, they can't hurt me no worse.

PHILLPOTS

I'm here to help you little girl, I'm right with you.

[He takes hold of KING KLEAGLE who towers above him and they circle round as if dancing. SADIE grabs

PHILLPOTS *to protect him and a little goblin grabs SADIE to pull her away. In this way the four circle swaying. One by one the other masked figures take hold of the turning group while chanting goes on:]*

RESPONSIVE CHANT

“ ‘Cause she’s walkin’ in the dark,
There’s a black time comin’ . . . ”

KING KLEAGLE

[raising both arms]

Stop!

[Silence]

We will give her the proper punishment following which we will ride her out of town.

RESPONSIVE CHANT

Halleluliah . . .

PHILLPOTS

Now look here——

KING KLEAGLE

[roaring at him]

Back! Back! And you may be glad that we don’t skin you alive! March on, Klansmen! The Cross and the Flag and the world’s eyes on us!

[The KLANSMEN are now grouped in a compact crowd at edge of stage, SADIE amongst them. They withdraw, chanting softly]

RESPONSIVE CHANT

[*as they go*]

“There’s a black time comin’ . . .
Awalkin’ in the dark . . .”

PHILLPOTS

[*trying to hold them back*]

Look here, don’t take her with you, don’t——

[*The KLANSMEN disappear. PHILLPOTS alone*]

I must get help . . . why, one of them’s coming back!

[*One of the KLANSMEN reappears right dragging SADIE roughly. PHILLPOTS confronts him*]

Let go of her, leave her alone.

[*The figure tears off its mask. It is COHEN*]

COHEN

[*gesticulating in his most Jewish manner*]

She was give into my care an’ I got charge of her ain’t it?

SADIE

Popper!

COHEN

Look at her, my little daughter, a girl that don’t know nuthin’!

SADIE

Look at yourself, you ain’t so much in that nightgown.

COHEN

That's why I done myself up in fancy dress, to save my girl, the first one a' them devils touched her, he'd got a butcher knife in the head.

[*He shows a knife under his robe*]

SADIE

Nobuddy can hurt me now, nobuddy can touch me now.

COHEN

Listen Sadie for the last time I argue with you.

SADIE

[*disregarding her father turns eagerly to PHILLPOTS*]
Have you been a long ways off, Mister?

PHILLPOTS

I went all around, to Tokio and Rome . . . but I was haunted——

SADIE

What?

PHILLPOTS

Haunted Sadie Cohen, by a dream of a little girl.

SADIE

[*smiling*]

What did she want?

PHILLPOTS

Love and champagne and a barrel of real diamonds.

SADIE

Ain't that the cat's earmuffs though. What did she get?

PHILLPOTS

She got tears in her eyes and a weight on her heart: what are you going to do?

SADIE

Don't worry about me, I ain't really alone.

COHEN

Look at her only, there it is for a girl I relied on, a girl I made a dream for.

PHILLPOTS

Perhaps she made her own dream.

SADIE

When he's born I'm gonna go to New York an' be a bad woman.

COHEN

There it is for a father's tears. She used to have her hair in a braid, she's a nightmare with her hair wild.

PHILLPOTS

[*to Sadie*]

Better listen to reason.

SADIE

Ain't no reason in things, jus' a feelin' stealin' over you that tells you what to do, jus' a kind a' jazz——

COHEN

Ouch, jazz! Ain't I acted right, what have I done,
where have I failed?

SADIE

[laughing and singing]

I'm agonna raise my kid . . . sing to him . . . show
him the moon. . . .

COHEN

She's got a jazz itch, no use speakin' to you Sadie while
you got such an itch.

SADIE

I don' wanna talk to you, I know what I must do! I'm
agonna raise my kid. . . .

*[She runs away from COHEN who tries to catch her.
She exits]*

COHEN

[following her]

Listen, only listen. . . .

PHILLPOTS

Really Miss Cohen, my advice would be . . .

*[PHILLPOTS and COHEN follow SADIE off. Enter right a
member of the KLAN running. PSINSKI appears left,
carrying a gun with a ragged red flag tied to the
muzzle]*

PSINSKI

[shouting as he comes]

Come on men, we ain't afraid a' them white devils!

[PSINSKI sees the KLANSMAN]

Stop or I shoot!

[The GOBLIN trembles visibly under his robe. PSINSKI seizes him, throws him on ground center]

One a' you I got anyways, show me the face Ku Klux before I finish you!

[Slowly figure on ground lifts hood and mask, revealing the black face of RASTUS scared so that eyes pop out of his head]

RASTUS

[chants tragically]

"I ain't done nuthin' to nobuddy no time,
I ain't here to stay, I'm jus' agoin' away
With them doggone Bow Wow Blues . . ."

PHILLPOTS

You can't belong to the Klan.

RASTUS

How come? Anybuddy owns a sheet can belong, I reckoned it was safer——

[PSINSKI's men appear in a compact mass behind him rear. Confused shouting]

PSINSKI

You ain't fit to associate with class-conscious workmen.

RASTUS

I'se willin' to withdraw.

[RASTUS *picks up skirts and runs left*]

PSINSKI

[*shouts*]

I'm with you men! Come on!

[*He raises gun above head and leads men across through shadows rear. They carry flags, pitchforks, knives. Shouting grows to a crescendo. Then sudden silence.*

The scene begins to brighten. Enter JIM in tattered clothes feeling his way with a cane. He is evidently blind]

JIM

Can't find nuthin' . . . help . . . who's there?

[*Noise of shouting off stage*]

Where am I?

[*swinging round with cane*]

Help I say, Goddam, why do they leave me alone like this? Who's there?

[SADIE *runs in, gives a little gasp. Pause*]

SADIE

[*breathless*]

He's come.

JIM

Who's that, what voice is that?

SADIE

Your ma told me I should pray hard.

JIM

My ma?

SADIE

She must be right 'cause I prayed like a steam engine
an' you're here.

JIM

Damned if I know what you mean.

SADIE

Come over here an' then you'll know.

JIM

[waving cane in front of him]

Can't. . . . Can't find nuthin'.

SADIE

You can't see?

JIM

When the Klan strung me to that tree they stuck things
in my eyes, things to burn, won't never see no more.

SADIE

Oh . . . but you come . . . even like this, don't mat-
ter, you come.

[Noise of shouting and fighting off stage]

JIM

What's that?

SADIE

The men, they're fightin' down there.

JIM

Where's that crazy Pole gone to?

SADIE

He's down there with the men.

JIM

I come with a bunch a' fellers, but I lost 'em all.

SADIE

[coming nearer to him]

Don't matter I'll lead you.

JIM

Why in Hell should you?

SADIE

I knew you'd come.

JIM

[sullenly]

Then take me to my mother, that's what I come for, get my mother out a' coal town, don't give a blue damn for anythin' else I says, excep' my mother's waitin'!

[shouts]

Where is she?

SADIE

[frightened]

Hush . . . quiet.

JIM

We went to the shack, me an' the bunch that come with me——

SADIE

Jus' too late, they burnt it down tonight.

JIM

I smelt the smoke.

SADIE

The Klan got everythin' their own way now.

JIM

I need my mammy's arms.

SADIE

They got her now.

JIM

Where? Let me at 'em.

SADIE

Hush, be quiet.

JIM

Gotta find her, get her out a' this.

SADIE

We'll fool them men in sheets, we'll get away.

[*She laughs excitedly*]

Some men have gone to help your ma, we better wait here—don't you know me?

JIM

[*shaking head*]

Got a voice like a bell ringin', I dunno no one with a voice like that.

SADIE

Who'd you think I am?

JIM

Some tall dame with hair all gold laughin' in the sun.

SADIE

[*softly*]

I'm here for you.

JIM

[*reaching out his arms*]

Hell then lemme touch you——

SADIE

[*backing away*]

No no . . . who am I?

JIM

Voice of a li'l bell . . .

SADIE

Go on . . . go on . . .

JIM

Wearin' clothes all silk an' hair that smells a' pink roses.

SADIE

I'm here for you.

JIM

Where are you?

SADIE

[comes close to him whispers trembling]

Here.

[JIM takes hold of her, fingers her shoulders brutally, her arms her face her hair]

JIM

I got you now I got you——

[abruptly as he recognizes her]

Li'l girl with them funny eyes, li'l Sadie Cohen.

SADIE

Don't call me that, call me your daisy, call me Desdemona, call me funny names.

JIM

But your voice ain't the same, what's happened?

[She laughs]

Bells . . . I hear somethin' stirrin' in your voice.

SADIE

Somethin' stirrin' in me I come to meet you——

JIM

What you bring me so early in the mornin'?

SADIE

Hush . . . somethin' to sing to, somethin' to be born.

[*Enter MRS. FLIMMINS left*]

MRS. FLIMMINS

Jim . . . Jim . . .

[*He starts wildly toward the voice. She clings to him*]

Can't you see me?

JIM

No.

MRS. FLIMMINS

Jim . . .

JIM

I come to take you away from here.

MRS. FLIMMINS

Your eyes Jim, your eyes . . .

SADIE

They stuck things in his eyes.

MRS. FLIMMINS

It's me must take you away, lead you . . .

SADIE

How can we get away from the Klan?

MRS. FLIMMINS

A li'l crowd a' them Klan men had me in a circle askin' me questions, then a bunch a' other fellers come an' one man told me to run.

JIM

Jake Psinski done that, that's my pal Jake.

SADIE

Where are they now?

JIM

The Klan?

MRS. FLIMMINS

We're on the hill an' they're all round us, but the men are fightin' 'em.

JIM

Smells like mornin'.

MRS. FLIMMINS

How'd you get here Jim? You ain't broke the law again?

JIM

No I know 'bout the law now.

MRS. FLIMMINS

It's law what you do you can't undo no ways.

JIM

I've been thinkin' 'bout that six months now, thinkin' how us folks got blood boilin' inside us, an' someways we can walk through Hell in an asbestos skin.

SADIE

Me too I know that now.

JIM

Are you laughin' or cryin'?

SADIE

It's nuthin', I jus' keep singin' to myself.

MRS. FLIMMINS

[*bitterly*]

She's one a' us kind now.

[*Enter PHILLPOTS left*]

PHILLPOTS

[*Seeing JIM*]

So you're here again.

MRS. FLIMMINS

What are them Kluxers doin'?

PHILLPOTS

Guess it's turned into something of a fight, but the Klan's too strong for them, they're all around us, see the lights.

JIM

[*mutters between his teeth*]

If I had my sight——

PHILLPOTS

They told me you were done for six months ago, strung to a tree——

JIM

Farmer come an' cut me down, put me in a bed, hid me till I could walk, then I walked to Charleston feelin' my way with a stick, they set me in the jail down to Charleston, then the Judge says, there's no what you call evidence he says, I jus' kep' my jaw shut tight an' they threw me out on my ear, they says can't do no harm no more, a guy without eyes is nuthin', the curse ain't on him no more. . . .

[*Jim shouts triumphantly*]

The curse is lifted, let 'im walk!

MRS. FLIMMINS

[*tensely*]

A woman has tuk the curse off you, that's what.

JIM

You mean you?

MRS. FLIMMINS

[*indicating SADIE*]

I mean her, she carries the curse you give her.

SADIE

[singing softly]

I'm agonna raise my kid,
I'm agonna sing to him soft . . .

JIM

[roughly]

What you laugh for what you sing for?

SADIE

It's all for you Jim.

PHILLPOTS

Little Desdemona bearing a burden, little Desdemona
from the black monster's hand!

JIM

I ain't so black.

PHILLPOTS

It's not you, the black monster upon her is coal, rising
upon her in a pillar of smoke.

MRS. FLIMMINS

I tried to make her see reason but she wouldn't.

SADIE

They says to me, there's ways a' fixin' it, I dunno how
. . . but not me, I'm agonna raise my kid, I'm wise
now!

JIM

What's bein' wise?

SADIE

It's a sickness in the stomach.

JIM

Does it kick?

SADIE

Sometimes it kicks.

MRS. FLIMMINS

T'ain't worth it.

SADIE

It's my turn now, I'm ready——

MRS. FLIMMINS

To make men you poor fools, you think you fight an' make trouble but rebellion comes out a' our stomachs!

PHILLPOTS

As a member of the good old middle class, I consider this conversation very irregular and I would suggest marriage.

JIM

[*thoughtfully*]

I wouldn't care.

[*Pause*]

SADIE

I wouldn't care.

MRS. FLIMMINS

None of us would care.

PHILLPOTS

It will set you right with the community, they don't care about a killing or two, but this is a serious matter.

MRS. FLIMMINS

I guess it's what the law would ask.

SADIE

When can we get married?

JIM

Right away!

[*Enter COHEN with Ku Klux uniform wrapped in a bundle*]

COHEN

I'm through, I resign from this lodge, it's no good.

[*He throws the bundle away*]

PHILLPOTS

Come here Mr. Cohen you're just in time.

COHEN

[*to JIM*]

There you are, loafer . . . crow . . . jail-bird!

JIM

What's eatin' him?

COHEN

My daughter——

MRS. FLIMMINS

[interrupting him harshly]

That's just a joke too, he's gonna marry her.

COHEN

Married you say? Married is it? That's another thing again.

MRS. FLIMMINS

Can't you laugh old man? Buck up an' laugh like me, mebbe you an' me get married too!

COHEN

[turning from her sadly]

I don't understand it at all.

[A sound of raucous music off stage]

MRS. FLIMMINS

What's that?

JIM

It's my pals, it's them musical miners. . . .

[triumphantly]

They're comin' I say they're comin'!

[Everybody turns to left as JAZZ BAND enters playing violently, led by PSINSKI still carrying his gun, they line up across stage. Only RASTUS is not among them. The music stops in straggling manner. Other miners appear still carrying guns and knives]

PHILLPOTS

Where are the night riders?

PSINSKI

They all went away 'cause it's mornin', night riders
don't work in daylight.

*[He is swaying a little, speaks thickly. The stage has
become brightly illuminated]*

PHILLPOTS

Psinski, I believe you're drunk!

PSINSKI

[thickly]

What of it?

PHILLPOTS

[smiling]

You the revolutionist, the idealist, turned to whiskey
at last.

PSINSKI

Go on, make a joke a' me, it's all hopeless.

PHILLPOTS

That's the Russian in you speaking.

PSINSKI

I ain't a Russian, I'm a Pole, an' it's all hopeless.

SMITH

You're in America now boy.

PHILLPOTS

Land of optimists.

PSINSKI

[*thickly*]

I'll speak to these Americans.

SMITH

Speech . . . speech . . .

PSINSKI

[*climbs uncertainly onto a soap box left, trying to find words*]

Comrades . . . we been fightin' like in a fog . . .

[*pointing to JIM*]

This guy lost his eyes . . . I speak in a fog a' thoughts now . . . in ten years, in fifty years, mebbe it will be clear . . . we got ideals, them guys in sheets got ideals, I am drunk with ideals . . . here's a girl gotta baby will be a workman in twenty years. Ask her what it means . . . I am tired!

SADIE

I carry a gravestone inside me but I don' care, I'm agonna raise my kid. . . .

PSINSKI

[*bitterly*]

An' his name shall be called Wonderful!

RESPONSIVE CHANT

[*of miners swaying in a row behind*]

"Wonderful . . . wonderful . . ."

PSINSKI

Mebbe that child will stand on the last barricade wavin'
a red flag in the face a' all time! An' behind him will
come marchin' a lot a' ghosts, all the soldiers that died
at Bunker Hill an' on the Marne marchin' to be
free——

PHILLPOTS

[*calmly*]

Bunk!

PSINSKI

[*flustered, steps down*]

Sure, ev'rything's bunk, so I wanna die, why won't some
fool shoot me?

[*He throws down his gun stands forlornly center*]

Any guy will shoot me, I'll shake his hand, call him
brother!

[*MAN IN SILK HAT appears suddenly, pushing his way
through the crowd importantly*]

MAN IN SILK HAT

[*shaking PSINSKI warmly by hand*]

Give me your hand my friend, I greet you. My friends,
I bring good tidings. I'm glad you men have come, I
am instructed to meet you half way.

PSINSKI

Is this half way?

MAN IN SILK HAT

We want to open up the mines, make concessions, boom business, sign contracts, all that sort of thing!

[The men cheer and wave arms in perfunctory manner]

PSINSKI

[dazed]

You mean, the strike is over an' you agree?

MAN IN SILK HAT

Yes indeed, I may say a lasting agreement, everybody fully pardoned.

JIM

Pardoned?

MAN IN SILK HAT

[a little flustered but shaking him warmly by hand]

My friend, this is indeed a pleasure. . . .

PSINSKI

The Klan? Where is the Klan?

MAN IN SILK HAT

Disbanded! All around you, you see the shining faces of loyal workmen!

[He makes a grandiose gesture]

PHILLPOTS

[*to PSINSKI*]

The laugh is always on you.

MAN IN SILK HAT

If you'll just come with me and sign the documents, the motion picture machines are ready for the ceremony.

PSINSKI

Ceremony?

MAN IN SILK HAT

[*muttering as he leads way to right*]

Of course . . . by all means.

[*He meets SHERIFF at extreme right. He motions PSINSKI off right and turns to the SHERIFF*]

SHERIFF

What's the meanin' a' this, Sir?

MAN IN SILK HAT

[*in a low voice*]

The moral effect . . . can't afford further trouble . . . publicity value . . . dollars and cents.

SHERIFF

What are your orders, Sir?

MAN IN SILK HAT

Make a list of the marked men and we'll get them in their beds tonight!

[*turning suavely to group on stage*]

My friends, we have each other's confidence.

[*Exit MAN IN SILK HAT right*]

PHILLPOTS

Just a minute, Sheriff.

[*leading SHERIFF to JIM*]

This gives you your chance for a wedding.

JIM

Howdy Sheriff. . . . Can you fix me up with a marriage license right off?

SHERIFF

[*produces his enormous sheaf of legal papers and starts thumbing them over industriously*]

Might be somethin' here that would do.

[*He adjusts his glasses*]

If it ain't a weddin', it's a lynchin'—lemme see, war insurrection an' riot—no that won't hardly do.

JIM

Never mind, marry us right away quick Sheriff.

SHERIFF

[*finding another paper*]

I'll have to fix you up with a dawg license, I'll revise it a little.

MAN IN SILK HAT

[*Appears suddenly in an upper box, with bright spotlight on him, and announces in best oratorical style*]

Gentlemen, I wish to announce that this is Mother's

Day! I have here a telegram from Calvin C. Coolidge stating that all men are brothers.

[He holds up the telegram. Applause from men on stage]

PHILLPOTS

[picks up a megaphone at edge of stage right and announces through it as if addressing a huge crowd]

Gentlemen, Industrial Peace has come!

[turning to SADIE and JIM]

Cemented in this marriage! A pact, a compact, an agreement, a document! The nation is rejoicing! There's going to be coal to keep 'em warm!

[Enter RASTUS left. Standing at edge of stage he begins to sing, softly twanging banjo]

RASTUS

“ 'Cause there's no land so grand as my land
From California to Manhattan Isle,
North an' South my sunny sky land,
I love every mile . . . ”

[All sway and sing. PHILLPOTS continues to announce]

PHILLPOTS

Kindly turn to the financial page, wait till the market opens, all for Wall Street!

[SHERIFF goes round shaking hands with everybody.]

PHILLPOTS puts away his megaphone. The crowd gather round RASTUS and join in the singing, in the manner of a college glee club]

RASTUS AND CHORUS

[*loudly*]

"Yankee Doodle . . . that melody
Keeps on ringin' in my ear,
Yankee Doodle . . . that melody
Makes me stand right up an' cheer,
I'm comin', U. S. A., I'll say,
I love you . . .

Make me lose those . . . Yankee Doodle blues . . ."

[*The SHERIFF is preparing for the marriage ceremony.*

JIM *raises his arms and shouts*]

JIM

Come on aroun' fellers that dig in the earth, make a
cloud aroun', a cloud a' men like coal dust, a whirlwind
makin' music——

[*The men chanting softly crowd around the marriage
group, and jazz music continues*]

COHEN

She ain't my Yiddisher Rose no more.

PHILLPOTS

She's an American Beauty now.

COHEN

[*wipes a tear from each eye*]

Babies they will have an' babies . . .

PHILLPOTS

And their children's children will be shouting oi, oi!

COHEN

We should break a bottle over the bride's head!

[*Swaying and dancing to the music, the SHERIFF is performing the wedding ceremony with MRS. FLIMMINS and COHEN on either side of SADIE and JIM*]

SHERIFF

An' I hereby pronounce you——

JIM

[*interrupting him*]

Sheriff, has it got a red seal on it?

SHERIFF

No, I didn't have no seal.

JIM

Put my blood on it, put a drop a' blood on it.

SHERIFF

Shut your mug till I finish.

JIM

Wait, got a knife?

[*SHERIFF annoyed takes a knife from COHEN and hands it to JIM. In dead silence, JIM holds out his arm, pricks it and with awful ceremony lets a drop fall on the paper*]

There's blood, now go on.

[*Singing and music start again with a blare of sound.*
MRS. FLIMMINS, COHEN, SADIE and JIM embrace

one another dancing. The whole crowd forms a compact swaying group behind them. OLD MAGGIE and POP PRATT appear and hobble forward doing an old-fashioned jig. Again a silence breaks the rhythm, and JIM shouts:]

Shake a leg ma.

MRS. FLIMMINS

[harshly]

We can dance with our hearts breakin'.

JIM

Everybuddy shake a leg.

MRS. FLIMMINS

I can dance too, I can dance as well as any old fool.

[She raises her skirts revealing a bright red petticoat and dances wildly. The violent rhythm grows in volume]

SMITH

[shouts with megaphone]

Join the Procession!

[Down the aisle of theatre comes BOOB with newspapers]

BOOB

[shouting as he comes]

Extry! Extry! Big peace!

PHILLPOTS

[*at top of steps front*]

Here kid, I'll buy those papers.

[*He takes them and starts tearing them, throwing them around*]

Here boys, here's confetti, there's where the news belongs!

[*JIM stands center smiling blindly. SADIE at a little distance from him swaying wildly, while the whole crowd marches round them, the JAZZ BAND and all the other characters. Then the Procession marches down through the audience. With an increasing noise and rhythm, the Procession disappears at rear of theatre. Then there is silence. JIM and SADIE alone on stage*]

SADIE

They're gone, we're alone.

JIM

[*feeling his way toward her*]

Where are you now?

SADIE

[*swaying and singing softly*]

I'm agonna raise my kid, sing to him soft . . .

CURTAIN

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